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## A short note on western political thinkers

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## THE GREEK CITY STATE

### PLATO

( )

The origin of the European Political theory can be traced back to the golden age of Athens – Greece. The Greek citizens who were known as HELLENS were the original residents of parts of northern Europe. They invaded Greece and enslaved the native people. With the help of these slaves they built up a beautiful civilization. It is argued that the Greek culture flourished because of the leisure time available to the Greeks. The household and routine activities were performed by the women and slaves. The Greek citizens were free to develop their culture. This theory that the Greek culture is the product of leisure time is not universally accepted. But there is no doubt that the Greeks laid down the foundation stones in almost all intellectual spheres.

They developed the new system of direct democracy. City states having limited territory and population ranging from 1000 to 10,000 people were established. Athens, known for its artistic and intellectual flavour and Sparta recognised for its prowess were the most popular among them. All male members of the Hellenese community above the age of 18 were considered as citizens. All females and slaves were excluded from the group of citizens assembled together in a meeting after regular intervals to discuss about their social economic and political problems. They arrived at a decision by the method of voting. All citizens participated in the meeting directly therefore it was known as direct democracy. It was an ideal system. But gradually various defects crept in the system. It was polluted. Rampant corruption, selfishness of the rulers, nepotism, lawlessness, and injustice was the common features of the tainted city state system.

The Sophists, the great orators, the persons having knowledge but lacking in wisdom supported the ruling class in this system. The relationship between the Sophists and

the rulers was based on the principle of cooperation. Socrates was the first person to revolt against this rotten system. He started inciting the common people against the rulers with his unique method. He had a sharp intellect. The ruling community couldn't afford to sit quiet in the wake of the constant publicity campaign run by Socrates against them. He was charged on the grounds of sedition. A death sentence was ordered against him. The admirers of Socrates were ready to rescue him but he refused their offer and preferred death to prove his faith in the principles of law. One person was seriously affected by the death of Socrates. He was his most beloved disciple he was been described as the heir of Socrates. He was Plato.

## PLATO : THE FIRST UTOPIAN

It is true that to a great extent thought reflects the existent reality but it is the particular characteristic of thought that it can easily transcend the limits of reality. Not only that but it can affect and change the reality in a favourable manner. The oppressive authority can at best curb the physical activities of a revolutionary but it can't restrict the process of thinking. In this sense a revolutionary thinker is always free. Plato was such a free soul. He traversed in the realm of political thought and philosophy unbound by any strings and therefore he is known as the first Utopian thinker in the world. He was worried by the contemporary situation. He wanted to change the society. He had a dream of the new society – of an ideal society. He has described his dreams in the three books .

### THE REPUBLIC

### THE STATESMAN

### THE LAWS

The Republic is full of the discussion of the ideal. It seems that he had almost forgotten that impractical ideas are meaningless. But later on in other two books he has progressively developed his thought towards reality.

Plato belonged to an aristocratic family in Athens. His father was an influential personality in the Athenian Court. His mother also came from an Aristocratic family. Plato received the best kind of education. He nurtured the ideas of building a political career. In his youth he was attracted towards Socrates. He had a strong sense of justice therefore he was deeply influenced by the ideas of Socrates. He spent most of his time in the company of Socrates. He was shocked by the death of Socrates. To avoid the evil consequences after the death of Socrates, Plato undertook a long trip of various parts of Europe. He learned different social and political systems and

compared and contrasted them with the Greek system. The scope of his thought widened. After some period he returned to Athens. He established the ACADEMY – a school to experiment on his ideals. He wrote all his books during this time. His experiments made him more and more practical. He died peacefully as a great octogenarian philosopher of Athens.

### The scope of plato's thought

Plato's thought is limited to the city state system. He thinks about the defects of this system. He suggests remedies to cure the state system and provides alternative systems but never transcends the limit of the city state. It is one of the great limitations of Plato and Aristotle. They couldn't foresee the growth of city state in the future. They couldn't imagine about the modern nation state or the medieval feudal state or the Roman Empire which was built upon the remnants of the broken city state system itself.

Secondly though Plato wanted to change the society, he was not able to analyse the process of change in a comprehensive manner. Every society is broadly divided into two groups of people. The rulers and the ruled. Both these groups contribute to the process of change in the society. Change is the result of interaction between these two groups. Plato marginalised the role of the ruled class and highlighted the role of the ruling class. According to Plato the ruling class functions as the sole propeller of change. This can't be accepted on realistic grounds. At the most it can be said that the ruling class acts as the leader of the process of change. The common people also play a definite role. But Plato neglects this class. He is an elitist thinker.

Thirdly the most common charge leveled against Plato – that is his extreme idealism. He has built an ideal of a Philosopher King. He says that the Philosopher King must have absolute powers. He must enjoy total freedom in the decision making process. Nobody should question his authority. He hates the rule of people. He says that common people are not able to rule, they do not possess the necessary qualities. They are selfish, greedy, narrow minded, fearful and they can be easily corrupted and therefore ideally there should be a philosopher King. This theory has been misused by dictators such as Hitler and Mussolini. They pretended themselves as the Philosopher King imagined by Plato.

But this can't be indicated as the demerit of Plato's theory purely. Plato's theory is based on the dictum " Virtue is knowledge and Knowledge is Virtue ". According to Plato attaining virtue is the ultimate aim of human life. Virtue represents all that is good in life. How to differentiate between good and bad things ? The things which

are 'just' are good and the things which are unjust are bad. What is a just thing ? Or what is the meaning of justice?

## Theory of justice

Plato has elaborately stated his theory of Justice in the book THE REPUBLIC. The book is in the form of dialogue among Socrates and his friends such as Cephalous, Thrysamachus, and Polymarkus etc. Everyone suggests his own definition of Justice. According to Cephalous to speak truth and to return the loans means justice. To help friends and to fight with foes is the meaning of justice according to Polymarkus, the son of Cephalous. According to Thrysamachus justice means the interest of the powerful. Thrysamachus is the representative of the Sophists. But Plato finds that all these definitions are incomplete. He states his own theory of justice.

Justice according to Plato is not an individual's problem. It is a wider social problem. A just social organisation is necessary to realise justice. Justice is the bond which holds a society together. It creates a harmonious union of individuals. Each individual has his life work according to his natural qualities. Justice is a private and public virtue. It helps in conserving the highest good of the state and the individuals. Societies arise to satisfy the needs of men which can be satisfied only by helping each other. Men have many wants and no man is self sufficient. Men have to exchange their functions and products e.g. the exchange between food and other means of physical maintenance. In other words society is a system of services in which every member both gives and receives. Exchange of services implies division of labour and specialization. The farmer produces more food than he needs and the shoemaker produces more shoes than he can wear. Each should produce for others. According to Plato this principle rests on the fundamental fact of human psychology that different men have different aptitudes and skills so they do some kinds of work better than others.

According to Plato every state must perform the three necessary functions. The physical needs of men must be supplied. The state must be protected and finally it must be governed. Every society has three kinds of men

- 1) Those who are fitted by nature to work, but not to rule. – THE WORKERS OR THE PRODUCERS having appetitive qualities.
- 2) Those who are fit to rule but only under the control and direction of others i.e. THE SOLDIERS OR THE WARRIORS, having courage.



3) Those who are fit for the highest duties of the statesmanship such as the final choice of means and ends. THE RULERS those who know and those who can think in a rational manner. Every individual has all these three qualities but he is specialized in one of them.

Individual justice means proper interrelation of these three qualities present in an individual and Social justice means proper interrelations among the three classes, corresponding to these three functions.

Every person should perform his own activities. He should not interfere in the activities of other individuals and classes. The classes in the society are open. Individuals can change their classes. Choosing a class basically depends upon the natural qualities of the individual. There is nothing better for a man than to have his work and to be fitted to do it.

Plato has not defined the concept of justice in juristic terms. Plato doesn't mean by justice, the maintenance of public peace and order. He is mainly concerned with division of labour, exchange of services and proper interrelation between various classes.

Once we have explained Plato's concept of justice, the question remains as how to implement this idea of justice in practice. It can be implemented with the help of positive and negative means. Communism of family and private property takes the form of negative means and the system of education forms a positive measure.

#### Communism of private property and family

To form a family and to have private property are basic instincts of human beings. But according to Plato they are great hindrances in the creation of a just society. Particularly if the members of the guardian class i.e. the rulers and the warriors indulge in family and private property it is harmful for the society. It destroys justice. The activities of both these classes the rulers and the warriors have an effect on the society hence these people should have limited rights about private property and family. As the activities of the producers' class are not so much important they can enjoy private property and family.

Describing the details of the theory Plato says the rulers and the warriors will not have family and private property. They can't marry or earn for themselves. Their biological and material needs will be fulfilled by the society. Both these classes will live in communes. Best couples will be matched together to have best off springs. These offsprings will be brought up by servants particularly trained in that activity.

These children will not know their parents. They will have equal feeling of reverence towards all elders. The elders will also not differentiate between them. They will have equal concern for all the children. The members of these communes will perform their respective tasks and in return the society that means the producer class will provide for their material needs.

This theory is against basic human nature and therefore it is an artificial theory. Instead of solving the problems it creates new and vexed problems. Aristotle has severely criticised this theory.

## THE SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

The theory of Communism was a means of removing hindrances from the path of building an ideal state. But Plato gave more significance to the system of education. Education is a positive means by which the ruler can shape human nature in the right direction to produce an ideal state. Plato discusses the system of education in detail. He says that the state is first and foremost an educational institution. Rousseau said that the book *REPUBLIC* was not a political work; it was the greatest work on education ever written. Plato considers that virtue is knowledge and it can be taught. The educational system is the only system to teach it. With a good system of education almost any improvement is possible. If education is neglected, it matters little what else the state does. The state can't hand over the system of education to private agencies. It must itself provide for education. Plato describes a state controlled system of compulsory education. His educational scheme is divided in two parts – elementary education which includes the training of young persons up to about the age of twenty and the higher education for selected persons of both sexes who are to be the members of the warrior and ruling class. The second stage is from twenty to thirty five years of age.

The plan for compulsory and state directed scheme of education as against the traditional system of purchasing such education as the market affords. Plato discusses the scheme of education for the rulers and warriors but he says nothing about the training of the producer class.

His system of elementary education was a combination of Athenian and Spartan systems of education. The curriculum was divided into two parts – gymnastics for training the body and music for training the mind. By music Plato meant the study of masterpieces of poetry and singing and playing songs. Plato emphasised more on mental development than physical development. He has introduced gymnastics to train the mind through body – indirect training of mind. It is meant to teach such

soldierly qualities as self control and courage. Moral and religious education was the purpose of elementary education.

In the system of higher education selected students are to be prepared for the highest positions in the guardian class. The idea of higher education was entirely his own. The curriculum of higher education included the study of mathematics, astronomy and logic. He considered them as most exact sciences. He felt that these most exact studies are the only adequate introduction to the study of philosophy.

The system of higher education is divided into two parts. At the end of the first part an examination is conducted. Those who fail in that examination enter into the warrior class. The others who pass the examination continue their education and are included in the rulers' class.

## THE IDEAL STATE

### THE PHILOSOPHER KING

We have described Plato as a utopian political philosopher. Plato was frustrated by his contemporary political system. He says in a letter written to his friend, "...all states now existing...without exception their system of government is bad. ...Hence I was forced to say in praise of the correct philosophy that it affords a vantage point from which we can discern in all cases what is just for communities and for individuals; and that accordingly the human race will not see better days until either the stock of those who rightly and genuinely follow philosophy acquire political authority or else the class who have political control be led by some dispensation of providence to become real philosophers".

Plato thought that rulers should have adequate intellectual training. They must have a clear cut idea of good life. They should be able to discriminate between good and bad and even between true and false goods. They must know the proper means to attain the true good. Plato believed that statesmanship is the supreme or 'Kingly' science.

Plato believes that " Virtue is knowledge " This implies that there is an objective good to be known and that in fact it can be known by rational or logical investigation rather than by intuition, guesswork or luck. The good is objectively real. It must be realized. Not only because men want it but because of its intrinsic qualities. It must be the main aim of the state to attain the true good. We have earlier explained that special qualities are necessary to differentiate between good and bad, or even to perceive real good. Therefore the man who knows i.e. The Philosopher should have

decisive power in government. His knowledge alone entitles him to do this. Government is an art depending upon exact knowledge.

Such a philosopher king will have unlimited power. There will be no checks on his authority. Plato believed that the philosopher King can't commit a wrong. He is infallible because he knows the nature of true good. He knows the means to achieve it, and he also knows that the only aim of human life is to attain true good. Therefore there is hardly any chance that a Philosopher King may make a mistake.

Plato considered the Philosopher King as the ideal form of government. In the REPUBLIC he is not ready to accept any other form of government. Fortunately he had a chance to experiment on his theme. The results were disastrous. It was a total failure. In his books THE STATESMAN and THE LAW Plato has become more realistic. He derives the idea of second best state. But he never forgets about his ideal form of state.

#### ARISTOTLE (384 to 322 B.C.)

Aristotle is the second important political thinker after Plato, in the line of Greek political thinkers. There is a chain of teacher student relationship between Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Plato was the most favoured student of Socrates. Aristotle was the most intelligent student of Plato. However, he also had differences of opinion with his master.

He was not a blind follower of Plato. Aristotle was not a native Athenian.

He was born in Stagira, a nearby city-state. He was the son of a court physician. At the age of 17, he joined Plato's 'Academy in Athens. For next twenty years until 347 B.C., Plato died and Aristotle left Athens. Until 335 B.C., he served as a teacher and administrator at various places. He became the tutor of young Alexander of Macedon. In 335 B.C., he returned to Athens, opened the 'Lyceum', and followed a stable and peaceful life.

During this period, he had written many of his important books. He undertook the investigation of 158 city state constitutions. He wrote treatises based on his findings. Unfortunately, only one work concerning the Athenian constitution is available now. It is a purely empirical study. Another important work is ' Politics ' In 323 B.C. Alexander who was the patron of Aristotle died. Because of the disturbing circumstances, Aristotle left Athens and spent the last year of his life in Euboea. He died there in 322 B.C.

In his book, POLITICS Aristotle has discussed different aspects of city-

state politics. He has discussed 1) the origin and nature of state. 2) The forms of government. 3) Citizenship 4) Revolution and its causes and remedies. 5) Slavery. We find criticism of Plato's ideas. Particularly his ideas about family private property and state are criticised by Aristotle. Aristotle argues that family and private property are very essential for a human being and one can't think about the ideal state by abolishing these institutions. Aristotle also differed from Plato on the point of role of law and constitution in an ideal state. According to Sabine, in fact, we find two Aristotle's in the book POLITICS. In the first part he is influenced by Plato and considers the construction of an ideal state as the main function of discipline of politics. But in the second part he has become more empirical, realistic and descriptive. He describes the actual nature of the state. He declares that politics is different from ethics. Plato regarded Politics as an ethical science concerned with the ideal. Thus the attitudes of Plato and Aristotle to study Political science were totally different. Chester Maxey describes Plato as the first Utopian and Aristotle as the first political scientist.

## THE ORIGIN AND NATURE OF STATE

The first point to be noted about Aristotle's thoughts of state is that they are restricted to the concept of smaller city state. It is an important defect in Aristotle's thought that he couldn't think beyond the concept of city state. It was the only ideal form of state for him. He disliked larger states. Plato regarded the state as merely the expansion of family. But Aristotle rejects this idea. According to him the nature of state and family is totally different. In a family the wife, children and slaves are totally controlled by the husband father and the master and are considered inferior to them. But in case of rulers and their subjects the relationship is based on an equal footing. It is the matter of division of functions and not division of status. Man is a social animal therefore the family is a natural institution. Family is prior to state in time but state is prior to family in nature. That means state is the result of development of human nature. Full fledged development of human nature is only possible in the institution of state. The characteristics of the state represent the qualities of human nature and therefore the state is a natural institution. Sex and appetite for food bring men together and family is formed. But they are not distinct human characteristics. They are also present in lower animals. Human nature is well displayed in the development of those powers that belong to men alone and the state is the only medium in which these can develop. Just as it is natural for a seed to grow into a tree it is natural to human nature to expand its highest powers in the state. Aristotle defines state as the highest form of human associations. Law and order, Justice are the gifts of state. Man is perfected in the institution of state. Aristotle quotes Plato "Man when perfected is

the best of animals but when separated from law and justice he is the worst of all.”

## THE IDEAL STATE

What Aristotle calls an ideal state is Plato’s second best state. Plato had permitted the rule of law or constitutional rule as the second best if the ideal philosopher king’s rule is not possible.

Aristotle never considered the rule of an ideal philosopher king. He feared that he may turn into a despot and a despotic rule was a worst type of rule according to Aristotle. His ideal was the constitutional rule. It was not as a concession to human frailty but as an intrinsic part of good govt. Law has impersonal qualities which no man can attain. “It is a reason unaffected by desire “It protects the dignity of the subjects. Constitutional rule means 1) a rule in public interest. 2) A rule according to general regulations. 3) Rule over willing subjects. Aristotle prefers customary law than written.

Drawing a sketch of an ideal state Aristotle suggests limited territory and limited population He also states its actual geographic position, character of citizens, (harmonious blending of intelligence spirit skill and wisdom) indispensable military training. He gives more importance to the educational system. Most of his ideas about education are influenced by Plato’s thoughts. He has also recognised the importance of gymnastics and music. He gives more weight to formation of good habits. Nature, good habits and reason are the three

things which make a man virtuous. Thus the ideal state of Aristotle though not a democracy includes a democratic element- A community of equals aiming at the best life possible.

## FORMS OF GOVERNMENT

Aristotle has stated a six fold classification of governments on the basis of form of government and the number of rulers. Forms of govt. were based whether the rule was according to constitution or not. The constitutional or pure form and the unconstitutional or the perverted. Both these forms of governments were further divided in six forms on the basis of number of rulers.

Table showing classification of governments as suggested by Aristotle

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|

| Ruled by | Pure        | Perverted |
|----------|-------------|-----------|
| One      | Monarchy    | Tyranny   |
| Few      | Aristocracy | Oligarchy |
| Many     | Polity      | Democracy |

In pure forms of government interest of the common people is considered most important whereas in perverted forms the rulers follow their own selfish interests. Aristotle argues that this is the cycle of government. Always these forms go on changing. Varieties of monarchy-

- 1) Life long general ship guided by law- Spartan system
- 2) Hereditary despotic, and tyrannical.
- 3) Elective tyranny.
- 4) Hereditary constitutional monarchy.
- 5) Absolute monarchy.

Varieties of Oligarchy –

- 1) High property qualification.
- 2) High property qualification and cooption.
- 3) Hereditary.

Varieties of democracy –

- 1) Equality of rich and poor.
- 2) Offices held of low property qualifications.
- 3) Rule of law.

The best practical state is a mixture of democracy and oligarchy. He describes

it as polity. Its social foundation is the majority of middle class neither rich nor poor. It saves the state because members of the middle class are not poor enough to be degraded or rich enough to be factious. They are disinterested enough to hold the rulers responsible and select enough to avoid the evils of the government by masses.

## CITIZENSHIP

The Greek idea of citizenship was different from the modern idea of citizenship. In modern states birth, domicile, or naturalisation are the methods of securing citizenship. The citizens enjoy particular rights and privileges given by the state. In ancient Greece the Helens were the only citizens and those too only males who have crossed the age of 18. Female slaves foreigners and people belonging to other races were not the citizens. The idea of rights of the citizens was not important. A citizen was expected to contribute to the social and political activities besides performing their day to day activities. The minimum level of participation was attending the monthly meetings of the council. It was also the duty of citizens to become the member of different committees.

Aristotle differentiated between a good citizen and a good man. They cannot be identical. Political qualities such as an aggressive nature, eloquence, tendency to accommodate others, ability to arrive at compromise, ability to instantly grasp the situation and skill to have command of the social circumstances, are essential characteristics of a citizen

## REVOLUTIONS

Change is an important feature of human life. The gradual and continuous change means evolution. However, some times there are sudden changes in the society. Violence is used to bring about such changes. They are known as revolutions. Political revolutions are generally of three types. 1) Some are aimed at changing the ruler. 2) Some are aimed at changing the form of rule. 3) Some are aimed at changing the social economic and political conditions of the society. Aristotle has explained his thoughts about the first two types of revolutions i.e. change of the ruler and form of rule.

### CAUSES-

Psychological causes-

1) Official corruption



- 2) Jealousy among the ruling class.
- 3) Arrogance of the rulers and administrative officers.
- 4) Fear among the citizens and the rulers also cause panic and anarchy. This may lead to a revolution.
- 5) Ambitious nature of the rulers specially their ambition to capture more power.
- 6) Antisocial feelings among citizens
- 7) Uncontrolled increase in the territory of the state.

#### Political causes-

- 1) Election intrigues
- 2) Carelessness
- 3) Negligent attitude towards small changes.
- 4) Inequality among different sections of society.
- 5) Concentration of power in the hands of a single authority.
- 6) Foreign interference.

#### Remedies-

- 1) Maintenance of justice and establishment of equality.
- 2) Decentralisation of power.
- 3) Manipulation of the masses by creating fake problems.
- 4) Good system of education.

## SLAVERY

Aristotle has expressed his thoughts about slavery in the context of family. He considers slavery as natural and justifiable. There are two kinds of men in human society. Some are physically well developed whereas some have a well-developed intellect. Manual and intellectual work is suitable to them respectively. Combination of the qualities of both classes is necessary for the development of the society. The system of slavery is beneficial to both the slave and the master. The master looks after the well-being of the slave and the slave frees his master from manual work.

Aristotle had suggested that Greeks should not be made slaves. Aristotle had justified slavery of course in the fourth century B.C. Now it has become a useless institution. Because of modernisation and mechanisation, the system is unnecessary but similarly it will be improper to blame Aristotle based on modern value system for his justification of slavery in 4th century B.C.

## CONCLUSION

The credit of differentiating science from philosophy goes to Aristotle. He started the scientific method of investigation in social sciences. Though the Greek background influenced him, most of his theories are of a universal nature. He has influenced the medieval political thought particularly Saint Thomas Aquinas. Aristotle influences even 20th century modern US political scientists like Robert Dahl and Almond & Powell. His classification of governments particularly impressed them. They have classified the modern governments mostly on the same basis.

## THE MEDIEVAL SYNTHESIS

### SAINT AUGUSTINE AND SAINT AQUINAS

The European history can be classified into three broad periods. The Ancient, Medieval and the Modern. The ancient period is considered up to 5th century A.D. The period between fifth and 15th century is known as medieval age and 15th century onwards starts the modern period. The first well-known human civilisation in Europe existed in Greece. The Greeks and later on the Romans dominated the realm of political activity and theory in the ancient period. (The medieval period experienced the rise and establishment of the Church.) The Greeks developed the city state system. A city-state was a small state having limited territory and population. They originated the system of direct democracy. The Romans destroyed the city state system and established the large empire. In the initial stages, the Romans had a republic but later on, they transformed it into a monarchical empire. The Roman Empire for the first time in history provided written law and constitution, an organised system of administration and a centralised authority. The important Roman thinkers

were Cicero and Seneca. They emphasised the decentralisation of power. The Roman Empire was destroyed in 5th century A.D. A feudal state came into existence. The church rose to power and gradually a holy Roman empire was established. The main point of difference between the ancient and the medieval state was 'religion.' The Greeks and the Romans followed a pagan religion. It was not an organised religion. It did not have a developed concept of God. Religion and God were considered as private affairs of the citizens. Religion and God were inferior to the state. There was no question of comparison between religion and state. Relations between state and religion became an important problem with the rise of Christian Church. The main principle of Christian philosophy was dual nature of man- The human body and human soul. The human soul belonged to the spiritual world and the heavenly city dominated it. Therefore, the Christian was bound to a two-fold duty... The Christian priests also derived the doctrine of two swords. The two swords represented the two authorities the spiritual and the temporal. They expected that there should be cooperation between the two swords. Every Christian must render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that belong to God. However, the real problem arose when the two came into conflict. The loyalty of the citizens was divided.

## CHRISTIANITY – AN ORGANISED RELIGION

Christian religion is the first well-organised religion in the world. 2000 years ago, it originated in Eastern Europe. In the beginning, the Romans were against Christianity. In 313, Emperor Constantine became Christian. Emperor Theodosius declared Christianity as a state religion in 393. Within hundred years, the Alaric defeated the Romans and the destruction of the Roman Empire started. As an effect, the authority of the Christian religion increased. It emerged as an organised institution having its representatives as the Priests and Bishops all over the Roman Empire. Each city had a Bishop and the Pope was the Bishop of Rome. He was considered as the Vicar of Christ on earth. He was the highest authority in Christian religion. The R.C. Church was the only organised institution in Europe in the dark ages. It influenced the spiritual as well as the temporal life of the people. In 8th century A.D., the Holy Roman Empire was established. The Pope coronated the Frankish King Solomon as the emperor of Holy Roman Empire on the Christmas day of 800 A.D.

In classical Roman political theory, man's first duty was to the state. However, to the Christian the primary duty was to God. This was the root cause of conflict between spiritual and temporal authority. Initially Christians accepted their obligation towards the state authority. The words of Jesus indicate the Christian policy- "Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's and unto God, the things that are God's". Saint Paul stated the same ideas in the New Testament. However, for Christians the office of the emperor was more important than the person occupying it. The views of the

churchmen on the controversy of divided loyalty between state and church may be illustrated with reference to three great thinkers of two centuries. St. Ambrose of Milan in second half of the 4th century, St. Augustine in the beginning of 5th century and St. Gregory in the second half of sixth century.

None of them was concerned to work out a systematic philosophy of the church and its relation to the state. They belonged to formative period of Christian thought. Nevertheless, their views became an integral part of Christian thought upon the relations between the two institutions.

St. Ambrose forcefully stated in favour of autonomy of the church in spiritual matters. Church had jurisdiction over all Christians in spiritual matters including the Emperor. He never questioned the duty of obedience to civil authority. He said "The Palaces belong to the Emperor the Churches to the Bishops ". However, he had not suggested resisting the King with force.

#### SAINT AUGUSTINE (354 – 450 A.D.)

St. Augustine was born in Thagaste in Algeria. His father was a pagan. He was an officer in the Roman administration. His mother was a devoted Christian. She converted her husband and son to Christianity. After completing his education, Augustine became a schoolmaster. He taught Rhetoric. In 384 B.C., he joined as a Prof. of Rhetoric at Milan. In Milan St. Ambrose influenced him. He returned to Africa in 388 and became the Bishop of Hippo Regius. He wrote different important books such as "THE CONFESSIONS" (400),"THE CITY OF GOD" He had delivered over five hundred sermons.

Augustine was a man of extraordinary intellectual power. Plato's ideas influenced him. He successfully Christianised the ideas of Plato. He is regarded as the keystone of the bridge between the ancient and modern political philosophy.

St. Augustine, Ambrose's great convert and pupil is the most important Christian thinker of his age. He had not stated a systematic philosophy but he had encompassed almost all the learning of ancient times and helped to transmit it to the Middle Ages. He substantially agreed with the Christian thought. His most important idea is the conception of Christian commonwealth together with a philosophy of history. This conception has become an important part of Christian thought. His ideas influenced both the Catholics and Protestants.

His great book THE CITY OF GOD defended Christianity against the pagan charge that it was the cause of downfall of the Roman Empire. Christian religion was criticised

by the pagans and the Christians themselves had become nervous about the principles of Christianity. So to challenge the criticism and to remove the nervous feeling, Augustine has written his book. He wrote 22 parts of this book within the period of 13 years from 413 to 426. Ten parts defend Christianity. In the remaining parts, he has explained the principles of Christianity.

Augustine restated the ancient idea that a man is the citizen of two cities- The city of his birth and city of God. He used this distinction to understand human history. He said that human history is full of conflicts between the earthly and heavenly city. Heavenly Peace and spiritual salvation is the foundation of the earthly city or society. The earthly city is the kingdom of Satan. Its history embodies itself particularly in Pagan empires of Assyria and Rome. The heavenly city is the kingdom of Christ. It embodied itself first in the Hebrew nation and later in the Church and the Christianised Empire. History is the dramatic story of struggle between these two societies. Ultimately, the city of God will be victorious. Peace is possible only in the heavenly city. Only the spiritual kingdom is permanent. It has no beginning and no end. All earthly kingdoms must pass away because earthly power is naturally unstable. James Bryce says that the theory of Holy Roman Empire was built upon Augustine's "CITY OF GOD".

## **NATURE OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT.**

Augustine was not against the state. However, he never thought of the state as an instrument to promote good life. For him it was like a hospital for the care of sick. The state is necessary and natural because sickness is natural. Augustine says that there may be good government and bad government. A bad government is a necessary consequence of man's sinful condition. God also ordains a coercive govt. Therefore, it is to be obeyed except when true worship of God is denied. The function of the govt. is to maintain peace and order. Justice is also important but peace and order are more important than justice.

While explaining the concept of Justice Augustine says, "It is the only bond which can unite men" His concept of justice was fundamentally different from that of Plato and Aristotle. According to him, justice could exist only in Christian state. He said, "True justice has no existence save in that republic whose founder and ruler is Christ"

His thoughts about private property are similar to the general Christian thought. In the initial stages, most of the followers of Christianity were poor. The general attitude was of other worldliness and common sharing of whatever belonged to the community. After it became a state religion, many of the rich class people adopted

Christianity. The Church permitted to have private property. However, it was expected that the rich people would look after the welfare of the common people.

Augustine justifies war for the sake of peace and order. He justifies war for the protection of Christian rule against any other religion, particularly pagans.

Augustine was against the institution of slavery. He described slavery as a punishment for sinful nature of man. He does not consider it as a natural institution. A man becomes a slave because he is a sinner. Therefore, it becomes his duty to submit and serve his master. He cannot demand emancipation. Though there is a difference between the slave and the master in the material world in the spiritual world both are equal. A slave can enter into the kingdom of God by doing his duty.

Thus, Augustine has done a great intellectual work in the dark ages. He laid the foundation of Christian thought. He transmitted the ancient knowledge to the middle ages, He Christianised Plato's ideas. He provided a firm basis for the doctrine of two swords. He was the strong supporter of the Church With his thoughts and theories he has contributed to the development of political thought in the middle ages.

#### SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS (1225 – 1275)

Two Dominicans, Albert the great and his pupil Thomas Aquinas Christianised Aristotle, made him the cornerstone of Christian philosophy. He gave more importance to harmony. God and Nature are large and rich enough to afford the endless diversity that makes up finite existence. The whole human knowledge forms a single piece. Particular sciences are at the base. Above these is philosophy – a rational discipline that seeks to formulate the universal principles of all the sciences; above reason and depending upon revelation is Christian theology. Though revelation is above reason, it is in no way contrary to reason. Theology completes the system of which sciences and philosophy form the beginning. It never destroys its continuity. Faith is fulfilment of reason. Together they build the temple of knowledge but nowhere do they conflict or work at cross-purposes.

#### NATURE OF THE UNIVERSE

God is at its summit down to the lowest being. Every being acts under the internal urge of its own nature, seeking the good or form of perfection natural to its kind and finding its place in the ascending order according to its degree of perfection. The higher rules over and makes use of the lower as God rules over world or soul over body. No matter however lowly it may be no being is wholly lacking in value it has its station, duties rights through which it contributes to the

perfection of whole. (The essence of this scheme is subordination to an end.) In such a structure, human nature has a unique place among created beings because having bodily nature man also has a rational and spiritual soul by virtue of which he is akin to God. He alone has both the body and soul.

## SOCIAL AND POLITICAL LIFE

It is the part of larger plan of nature. Like nature society is a system of ends and purposes in which the lower serves the higher and the higher guides and directs the lower. Following Aristotle Thomas described society as a mutual exchange of services for the sake of good life. The common good requires that such a system should have a ruling part, just as the soul rules the body. Thomas compares the founding and ruling of states, the planning of cities, building of castles, establishment of markets to providence whereby God creates and rules the world i.e. as God creates and rules over the world the king rules over the state.

Ruler ship is an office or trust for the whole community. Ruler is justified in all that he does solely because he contributes to the common good of the society. His power is derived from God for the service of the people. The moral purpose of government is paramount. He cannot go against moral principles. It is his duty to direct the action of every class in the state in a particular way so that men may live a happy and virtuous life. Ultimately, this must lead to a good beyond earthly society to a heavenly life. However, this is beyond human power, this belongs to the priests more than the rulers.

Speciality of Thomas is that he regards orderly political life contributes to the ultimate cause. The ruler should remove the hindrances to good life. Moral purpose of the state implies that authority should be limited and it should be in accordance with law. He disliked tyranny. Resistance to the bad ruler is justified but people should see to it that there resistance is less injurious to the common good than the tyranny of the ruler.

Sedition is a deadly sin. Justifiable resistance is not sedition. He had little to say about the forms of government. He defended monarchy. He considered it as a best form of government. He provided two remedies against tyrants. Where the ruler's power is derived from the people, they should restrict the ruler by enforcing the condition upon which the authority has been granted.

## NATURE OF LAW

He revered law and assumed its authority to be inherent and not dependent on human origin. He attempted to relate human law with divine law because law has a broader scope than a means of regulating human relationships. Human law, for him, was part and parcel of government. Such a definition of law reduced its legal and institutional status. According to him, an unlawful ruler was a violator of human rights but more importantly, he was rebel against whole divine system.

He gave a fourfold classification of laws. They are four forms of reason – ETERNAL LAW, NATURAL LAW, DIVINE LAW, and HUMAN LAW. ETERNAL LAW is identical with reason of God. It orders the whole creation. It is above physical human nature and it is beyond comprehension of man. However, it is not contrary to human reason.

NATURAL LAW is reflection of divine reason in created things. It manifests in the natural tendency of all living beings to seek good and avoid evil, to preserve them and to live a good life. Natural law is common to all men irrespective of religion or any other difference.

DIVINE LAW substantially means revelation. It is the gift of God's grace rather than a discovery of natural reason. Revelation adds to reason but never destroys it.

ETERNAL, NATURAL AND DIVINE LAWS set standards of behaviour they are sometimes applicable to human beings but they are not exclusively applicable to them or they are not specifically derived from human nature. The law particularly designed for human beings is the HUMAN LAW. Human law introduces no new principles. It merely applies to human kind the greater principles. Law sets standard for the general good rather than for the advantage of an individual or particular class. Behind it, there is a general authority rather than individual will. It is created by legislation, made by a public personage or by means of creating custom. He defines law as "An ordinance of reason for common good made by him who has care of the community". This definition shows the influence of Aristotle. Natural law is the basis of Human law. It is a corollary of Natural law. Natural law provides the general principle. Human law helps in applying the principle to particular circumstances e.g. Murder is contrary to nature. However, natural law does not provide a precise definition of murder nor does it provides a specific penalty. Human law does this function. It may vary from nation to nation and circumstances to circumstances. However, always the principle remains the same. That means life has a single end but many means.

He took a temperate stand on the controversy between the spiritual and the secular authorities. He was a moderate papalist. Augustine was strongly in favour of total control of the society by the Church. However, Aquinas never wanted to change the



spiritual supremacy of the Church in legal supremacy. He never drew a sharp line between Reason and Revelation. He took the middle position.

## LAW AND CUSTOM

He says Customs of God's people are laws. Human law is the codification of customs. Custom has the force of law; it abolishes law and is the interpreter of law.

## SLAVERY

Aristotle defines slavery as a natural institution. Augustine interprets it as the result of sinful nature of man; it is the punishment for sin. St. Thomas looks upon slavery as designed to stimulate bravery among soldiers. In ancient times, soldiers of the defeated party were enslaved and therefore to avoid slavery the soldiers will fight bravely. He also argues that while all men are equal in the eyes of God, they do not have equal intellectual power; therefore, inferior persons should be placed under the charge of the superior. St. Thomas Aquinas was another great medieval philosopher. The main task of his life was to reconstruct Aristotle's works. He completed it successfully. He was as 'CHRISTIANED ARISTOTLE' of middle age. 'ANGELIC DOCTOR' and 'SAINTED ARISTOTLE'.

## RENAISSANCE : THE EMERGENCE OF MODERN STATE

### M A C H I A V E L I

Human history is broadly divided into three periods – ancient medieval and modern. However, this is an unnatural division. Human history is a continuous process. It is divided in parts for convenience based on major changes in social political and economic systems of the society. In the ancient times, the Greeks and the Romans had a particular life style. It was wiped out after the destruction of the Roman Empire. This was the end of the ancient period. Feudalism, Christian church replaced the ancient Greek and Roman institutions. The nature of social political and economic life was entirely changed. This system continued nearly for thousand years. This was the medieval period.

Renaissance interrupted the medieval life style. Renaissance means rebirth. It was the rebirth of human species. Corruption, anarchy, lawlessness, greed for power was the rule of the day in medieval ages. It was the Dark Age. It was the age of bastards and adventurers. It was a society created to illustrate Aristotle's saying "Man when separated from law and justice is the worst of all animals". Men had no motives and interests except selfish interests. Renaissance generated new changes in social life. It

saved the human species. It was a turning point in history. It was a rebirth of human species. The movement was triggered off in Florence, an Italian city. The citizens of Florence revolted against the feudal lords, church and established their self-rule. Later on, it extended to all parts of Europe. To establish liberty, equality and justice were the main objectives of this movement. Greek and Roman culture was revived. Thousand years old, indiscriminate, irrational, arbitrary and tyrannical rule of the Christian Church was overthrown. Creative genius of man breathed a free air. There were new inventions in all fields of life. Individual was considered as the centre of life. The idea that changes in life are the result of human activities was well established. It was believed that all activities can be explained with the help of cause and effect relationship. Human life can be controlled. This idea gave birth to modern science. In the medieval age human groupings such as race, religions were more important than the individual was. In the modern period, the development of the personality of the individual was more important.

However, by the end of fifteenth century economic changes remodelled the medieval institutions. The class of traders became an important and powerful class. They were against the feudal lords and the church. They supported the monarchical rulers. The medieval society and its institutions were essentially local. This was the consequence of limitations on the means of communication. A large political territory was not governable. The middle class easily defeated these feudal lords. Absolute monarchies were established. Cooperation between the ruling class and trading class was the basis of the system. The rulers protected the business concerns of trading class and they in return provided financial political support to the rulers.

The new system tried to remove the demerits of the old system. It also overturned the good aspect of medieval political thought that was medieval constitutionalism. The church became a voluntary association or a partner of the national government. The idea of Nation state is the gift of modern period. All over Europe, the small feudal states united to formulate large nation states. Common language was the basis of their unification. With the invention of gunpowder, the emperors became powerful. It was possible for them to have standing armies. Thus, the modern nation states had large territories and monarchical system of government. The religious and secular fields were separate. The King enjoyed absolute power.

### **MACHIAVELLI (1469 – 1527)**

Catastrophic changes were occurring throughout Europe. They produced an equal amount of change in political theory. In the early years of 16th century, Machiavelli summed up these changes. He was the only man of his age to see clearly the direction of political evolution taking place throughout Europe. He had a better idea of

the medieval institutions and he grasped the modern political institutions. He knew the part that naked force was playing in the process of change, he was aware of the moral and political corruption still he had an urge for healthier social life, he had a sense of national unity. The final goal of his life was to create a unified Italian nation.

He was born in Florence in 1469 in a middle class family. His father was a lawyer. Machiavelli received the best education that was available in his times. He had a political ambition. However, he was against Monarch and Italy was under the monarchical rule of Medici since 1469. In 1498, the monarchical rule was overthrown. A republic was established. Machiavelli was appointed as a secretary. He served until 1512. He successfully conducted 23 diplomatic missions. In 1512 Monarchical rule of Medici was re-established. Machiavelli was imprisoned because he favoured the republic. He was charged of conspiracy but managed to avoid death. He was released from the prison. However, he was forced to retire from politics. His interest in politics was genuine. He wrote two books – THE PRINCE and THE DISCOURSES ON THE FIRST TEN BOOKS OF TITUS LIVY. He wrote THE PRINCE to please Medici. He has also written the books – THREAT OF WAR – FLORENTINE HISTORY.

## HIS METHOD

THE PRINCE and THE DISCOURSES are more important for political theory. He has completed these two books in 1513. However, the treatment of government in these two books is inconsistent and contrary to each other. Both books contain causes of the decline and rise of states and by which the statesmen can make them permanent. In THE PRINCE, he favours monarchy while in THE DISCOURSES he champions the cause of republican form of government. Both books indicate the same qualities – indifference to the use of immoral means for political purposes and the belief that government depends largely on force and craft. His writings belong to a class of diplomatic literature. He had the shrewdest insight into points of weakness and strength in a particular political situation. However, he exaggerates the importance of the game of politics for its own sake. He assumes politics as an end in itself. Political and military measures are almost the sole objects of his interest. For him the purpose of politics is to preserve and increase political power. He discusses the advantages of immorality skilfully used to gain the final goals. However, for the most part he is not immoral. He thinks purely in terms of politics. However, politics is part of the broader system. It is integrated with the economic and social systems. However, Machiavelli considers politics as independent.

Machiavelli condemns Christian morals because they are otherworldly. Machiavelli was least concerned with the spiritual field and the otherworldly interests. According to him, material life was not at all related with the spiritual world. Its own laws

governed the material world. Therefore, only those laws should be followed. He offers double standards of morality for rulers and people. He sanctioned the use of immoral means by the rulers but he knew that moral corruption in people makes good government impossible. Hence, he suggested that common people should strictly follow moral principles

He was merely interested in political power and was indifferent to all other matters. However, he was not scientific or empirical. His empiricism was that of common sense or of shrewd political foresight rather than inductive empiricism of Aristotle. He derived his examples from history but he had not followed the historical method. He used history according to his convenience. In that sense, he was very unhistorical. He did not develop his political theories in a systematic manner. It was in the form of remarks upon particular situations. However, behind them there was a consistent point of view. He was not much interested in philosophy; he was a practical political thinker. The doctrine of Reason d'état or reason of state reached its perfection in the writings of Machiavelli. He was the positivistic thinker. Positivism is a system of thought put forth by August Comte which deals with realities and is based on sure results reached through scientific method. Positivism approaches the basic problems of politics from an amoral point of view. It separates politics from ethical considerations. It does not mean defending immorality.

## UNIVERSAL EGOISM

## MACHIAVELLI'S THOUGHTS ON HUMAN NATURE

Human nature is essentially selfish. The effective motives on which the statesman should rely are egoistic e.g. desire for security in masses and desire for power in rulers. Government is founded on the weakness and insufficiency of the individual who needs protection. Human nature is aggressive and acquisitive. Men aim to keep what they have and try to acquire more power and possessions. There is no limit to human desires. However, power and possessions are limited in nature. There is always competition between human beings. This threatens anarchy unless restrained by law. Power of the ruler is built upon the imminence of anarchy. Men are in general bad. This assumption should be the basis of the policies of the ruler. Successful government must aim at security of property and life before everything else. These are the universal desires in human nature. "Man more readily forgives the murder of his father than the confiscation of his patrimony", hence the prudent ruler may kill but he will not plunder. Thomas Hobbes states the same theory with the help of psychological justification. Natural aggressiveness of human nature makes struggle and competition a normal feature of every society". Men always commit the error of not knowing when to limit their hopes". This explains the defeat of the government.

However, it also explains the stability of healthy society. Opposing interests are held in equilibrium.

## THE KING OR THE OMNIPOTENT LEGISLATOR

Machiavelli gives supreme importance to the King or the lawgiver. He says the ruler is outside law and morality. The only standard to judge his acts is success of his political adventures. The King can use cruelty, murder or any other means provided they are used with sufficient intelligence and secrecy to reach their ends. "When the act accuses him the result should excuse him."

Machiavelli's Prince is perfect embodiment of shrewdness and self-control. He makes capital alike of his virtues and vices. He has deep distrust of halfway measures in politics. Machiavelli admired a resourceful despot. However, he recommended despotism only in two special cases-

- 1) The making of the state
- 2) Reforming of a corrupt state

Once founded a state can be made permanent only if people shared governmental power and state is run according to law. Despotism is powerful medicine for corrupt states but still a poison, which must be used with greatest caution. He illustrates the examples of France and Spain. He says in these countries corruption was rampant but there was no disorder and trouble because there was a king to control the situation and not because of the goodness of the people. Corruption to Machiavelli means in general the decay of private virtue and civic probity, all sorts of licence and violence, inequalities of wealth and power destruction of peace and justice, growth of disorderly ambition, disunion, lawlessness, dishonesty and contempt for religion.

Machiavelli said that the king should have a disciplined mind. He should be able to follow moral principles when he is dealing with civil problems and at the same time while dealing with matters of security of state, he should use any measures including immoral measures.

Religion is the powerful force, which influences the minds of common people. Hence, the ruler must exploit the religious feelings of people for his benefit.

## REPUBLICANISM AND NATIONALISM

Machiavelli favoured a gentle ruler wherever possible. He should use severe measures rarely. Preservation of the state depends upon excellence of its law. Law should regulate even monarchy. Machiavelli preferred elections to heredity. He suggested that the king should propose measures for public good. There should be liberty of discussion. People must be independent and strong. Machiavelli had a great esteem for liberal and lawful government. He was also against aristocracy and feudalism. He said interests of the feudal lords were against the monarchs and the middle class. They follow an idle life with the help of their wealth. They did not provide any useful service to the society therefore; they were the enemies of the civil government.

Machiavelli hated mercenary soldiers. They are faithful to no one. They are ready to fight for whosoever would offer larger pay. They are more dangerous to the employer than the enemy is. They are incompetent against better-organised and loyal troops. They exhaust the treasury. The art of war is primary concern of a ruler. It is the condition of success in all his ventures. He should possess a strong army of his own citizens loyal to the state, and attached to his interests. Military training for all able-bodied citizens from 17 to 40 should be compulsory. Patriotism and desire for unification of Italy were the important features of his thought. He said duty to one's country overrides all other duties. Hope of peace and unity for Italy was real motive of Machiavelli's thought.

Machiavelli was an enigmatic personality. At once, he was an extreme cynic and a patriot and ardent nationalist, a convinced democrat and a man favouring despots. His thought was the result of wide range of political observation and reading in political history. It has no general system. He writes about nothing and thinks about nothing except politics, statecraft and art of war. He had no interest in social and economic problems. His philosophy attributes the success and failures of politics chiefly to the shrewdness skill or incompetence of the rulers. Therefore, it is superficial. He thought that moral religious and economic factors in the society are the forces in society, which a clever politician can turn to the advantage of the state. However, this is not the reality. Machiavelli's philosophy is both narrowly local and narrowly dated. Had he written in any other country or in Italy itself after the beginning of Reformation he would have treated religion in a different manner.

## THE FLOWERING OF THE MODERN STATE

St. Thomas Aquinas was a moderate papalist. He accepted the importance of the authority of state. Marsilio of Padua for the first time separated the two fields of religion and state authority from each other. Machiavelli more emphatically stressed the importance and independence of secular authority. He suggested manipulation of

religious feelings of the common people for better ruling. Majority of political thinkers continued the same line of thought in the next century. Thomas Hobbes almost completed the separation between religion and state.

### THOMAS HOBBS (1588 – 1679)

THOMAS HOBBS was a British political thinker. Britain had a comparatively more liberal tradition of thought than the other countries of the European continent. Britain is a west European country. However, it enjoys a special position. It is not directly connected to the European continent. The English Channel separates it. In ancient and medieval times because of lack of developed communication facilities Britain always remained aloof from Europe. The incidents on the continent did not influence England. It enjoyed a peaceful, gradual and systematic ideal process of development. The common people also participated in political activities and demanded political rights. e.g. In 13th century common people presented before the King, the Magna Carta, a document containing rights of people and restricting monarchical powers. This tradition of revolt continued. It became the first country to challenge monarchy. There was a civil war between the monarchy and the common people from 1642 to 1649. Common people led by Cromwell executed King Charles in 1649. The Royal family somehow escaped from England and went to France.

He was the tutor of the Prince. Thomas Hobbes was born during the period of the Spanish Armada. (1588) The Spanish naval force had attacked on English coastal areas. Later Hobbes has written that he and terror were born twins. His father was a Vicar of Charlton and Westport. He completed his school education in Westport. At the age of 15, he joined the Oxford University. Medieval thought dominated University education. Hobbes was not at all interested in the university syllabus. Geometry influenced him. Particularly Descartes- the mathematician of his times influenced him. Galileo also influenced him. For some time he worked as a secretary to Francis Bacon.

Thomas Hobbes has written a series of books and tracts from 1640 to 1651. In 1651, he wrote the ' LEVIATHAN '. Hobbes's political writings were occasioned by civil wars and written to exert influence upon the side of King. He supported absolute government. Because of his personal interests, he was attached to the royal family. He sincerely believed that monarchy was the most stable and orderly government. However, his principles were contrary to pretensions of the Stuarts. The friends of the King might well feel that Hobbes's friendship was as dangerous as Cromwell's enmity. Some thought that ' LEVIATHAN ' was written to flatter Cromwell. His political philosophy had a wide sweep. Its logic affected later history of moral and political thought. In 19th century, the philosophical radicalism of Utilitarians and Austin's

theory of Sovereignty incorporated his ideas. It served the ends of middle class liberalism a cause with which the philosopher would have had little sympathy.

## SCIENTIFIC MATERIALISM

Defence of monarchy was the superficial part of his philosophy. He was the first modern thinker who brought political theory into intimate relation with modern system of thought. His thought was beyond occasional or controversial literature. His philosophy illustrates the saying of Bacon. "Truth emerges more easily from error than from confusion". His system of philosophy can be described as Materialism. Hobbes's philosophy was a plan for assimilating Psychology and Politics with the exact physical sciences. Good method for him meant carrying over into other subjects the mode of thought, which had been superlatively successful in Geometry. (Geometry – simplest to complex while going forward it uses only what it has previously proved. Thus, it builds solidly. It takes nothing for granted. Construction begins with self-evident – a pyramidal structure.)

## HUMAN NATURE AND STATE OF NATURE

For Hobbes both nature and human nature were systems of causes and effects. He derived his basic principles from human nature. For Hobbes human life is not controlled by an end but by the cause and that is the psychological mechanism of human animal. Societies are result of mutual actions and reactions between different human beings. Stable union is not because justice, fair dealing, or any moral ideals but merely because the causes that will evoke a generally cooperative kind of conduct. His system of thought was a first wholehearted attempt to treat political philosophy as a part of mechanistic body of scientific knowledge. He had a different meaning of laws of nature. It was for him a set of rules according to which and ideally reasonable being would pursue his own advantage; if he were perfectly conscious of all the circumstances and quite unswayed by momentary impulse and prejudice. He assumes that in the large men really act in this way.

## THE INSTINCT OF SELF PRESERVATION

Hobbes faced the problem to state law human behaviour and to formulate the conditions upon which a stable society is possible. (According to materialistic principles, reality consists always in motion of bodies. It is transmitted into sensation. It aids or retards the motion) so heart was more important than brain. Desire or aversion is created. Emotions are always paired- they are forms of desire or aversion. e.g. love and hate joy and grief hope and despair and courage and fear benevolence and anger i.e. mental pleasures and pains. The will calls for no special treatment.



Every emotion is a form of reaction to stimulation – Novel element in Hobbes's psychology. Psychological theory by which he tried to make egoism a scientifically grounded account of behaviour.

He used a deductive method. His derivations were based on the assumption that human motives arise from the primitive attraction or retraction theory. The rule behind all behaviour is that the living body is set instinctively to preserve or heighten its vitality. Self-preservation is the basic motive – it means continuance of individual biological existence. Life is a restless pursuit of means of continued existence. Means of security are precarious therefore; moderation of desire cannot place a limit to the struggle for existence. The desire for security is for all practical purposes inseparable from the desire for power, the present means of obtaining apparent future goods. Man secures more power because he cannot assure the power and means to live well which he has without the acquisition of more. Therefore, the modest need for security is equivalent to an endless need for power of every sort – riches, position, reputation or honour, the tangible gains or the intangible glory.

Each human being is actuated or forced to action only by considerations that touch his own security or power and other men are of consequence to him only as they affect this. All individuals are roughly equal in strength and cunning. None can be secure hence so long as there is no civil power the condition of war of every man against every man. There is no industry navigation cultivation building art or letters and the life of man is solitary, poor, nasty brutish and short. There is no right or wrong, justice or injustice, rule of life is " Only that to be every man's that he can get; and for so long, as he can keep it. It is equal to life of savages.

## RATIONAL SELF PRESERVATION

There are two principles in human nature – desire and reason. The first compels men to take for themselves what other men want while reason teaches them to "fly a contra natural dissolution " What reason adds is not a new motive but a regulative power or foresight by which the pursuit of security becomes more effective. There is a hasty acquisitiveness and more calculating selfishness, which brings a man into society. Upon this regulative power of reason depends the transition from the savage and solitary to the civilized and social condition. The spring to action is self-preservation but rational self-preservation enlightened by foresight of all the consequences and this provides the conditions by which men can unite and cooperate. Man knows that peace and cooperation have a great utility for self-preservation than violence and competition. Self Interest motivates Human behaviour. Society must be regarded merely as a means to this end – complete utilitarian and complete individualist. Society is an artificial body because human

beings find it individually advantageous to exchange goods and services – this is clear-cut individualism. The defence of monarchy was superficial. Hobbes broke the power of tradition by a clear headed and cold-hearted rationalism.

## THEORY OF SOVEREIGNTY

### THE CONTRACT

Society depends upon mutual trust. How this is reasonably possible? Because of unsocial inclination of men, it is hopeless to expect them to agree spontaneously to respect each other's rights, and unless all do so, it is unreasonable for any to forego self-help. Only an effective government can formulate laws." The bonds of words are too weak to bridle men's ambition avarice, anger and other passions, without the fear of some coercive power. "The effective motive by which men are socialized is fear of punishment. Reason is too weak to offset the avarice of men in the mass. Therefore, government is identified with force. To justify force Hobbes retained the ancient device of contract.

The contract was not binding upon the ruler. It was between individuals by which all resign to self-help and subject himself or herself to the sovereign. They took the following pledge –

I AUTHORISE AND GIVE UP MY RIGHT OF GOVERNING MYSELF TO THIS MAN ❖

OR TO THIS ASSEMBLY OF MEN ON THIS CONDITION THAT THOU GIVE UP THY ❖

RIGHT TO HIM AND AUTHORISE ALL HIS ACTIONS IN LIKE MANNER...WE OWE TO THE LEVIATHAN OUR PEACE AND DEFENCE.

A mere multitude cannot have rights and contract. Only individual men can do this. Society is a mere fiction. Tangibly it can mean only the sovereign. Unless there be a sovereign there can be no society. Society has only one voice with which it can speak – that is of a sovereign – the mortal God – because he makes it a society.

There is no choice between absolute power and complete anarchy. All social authority should be concentrated in the hands of the sovereign. Law and morals are merely his will. His authority is unlimited or is limited only by his own power because there is no authority except by his permission. Sovereignty is indivisible and inalienable. Resistance to authority can never be justified since justification would require the approval of authority itself. Resistance will only occur wherever government fails to produce security.

## STATE AND CHURCH

The spiritual was a mere ghost for him. A figment of imagination. He doesn't deny the existence of religion but he is clear that there is nothing to say about it.

“ For it is with mysteries of our religion as with wholesome pills for the sick which swallowed whole have the virtue to cure; but chewed are for the most part cast up again without effect ”

The belief in nonmaterial substances was propagated by the clergy for their own advantage. Belief can't be forced, but profession of belief is an overact and therefore falls within the province of law. Church is authorized by the sovereign. There can't be conflict between divine and human law. Religion is completely inferior to law and government in every sense. He attributed less moral weight to religion than Machiavelli. At the same time he has devoted nearly half of the Leviathan to discuss religious problems.

Logical clarity of argument was the main feature of Hobbes's philosophy. It was not the product of realistic observation. His political thought belonged to the realm of scholarship. He defended monarchy. But it was the superficial part of his thought. He has explained human nature and on the basis of human nature he shows the inevitability of monarchical system. While explaining the causes of creation of state he says it was created only because of its utility. Thus Hobbes sow the seeds of utilitarian thought. He grants the right to resist the state if it fails to protect individuals. Security of the individual was always important for Hobbes. This indicates that he was a thorough individualist.

## JOHN LOCKE

There are different theories which explain the origin of state e.g. the divine origin theory, the force theory, the evolutionary theory. The social contract theory is one of these theories explaining the origin of state. Many philosophers have stated social contract theories. These theories doesn't have historical basis. They are based on imagination. Different thinkers have used this theory to support different arguments. Only the theme of social contract is common among all these theories. They present different interpretations about the origin of state. The social contract theory provides another new interpretation of origin of state. Many thinkers have interpreted the origin of state with the help of social contract theory. The social contract theory doesn't have historical basis. It is the product of imagination. Different thinkers have used the theory to serve different purposes. Out of the numerous social contract theories the

theories of Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau are considered important because they are stated in clear terms.

Hobbes and Locke both British philosophers belonged to the 17th century. Both were associated with the two important events in British history in 17th century. Hobbes was associated with Bloody revolution of 1648. He favoured the King's side and criticised the democrats and democracy. He stated his theory in LEVIATHAN written in 1651.

The British civil war which started in 1642 ended in 1648 after the execution of Charles I. Cromwell took over power. He assured a democratic rule after certain period. But the dream of democracy was not realised. Cromwell behaved just like an absolute monarch. After the death of Cromwell in 1660, monarchy was restored in England. Charles II became the new monarch. He continued his rule for a period of 25 years from 1660 to 1685. He created the serious crisis of liberty. Particularly in the last years of his rule the situation became very critical.

After Charles II James II came to power. He was over ambitious and foolhardy. He was ardent follower of Catholicism. He tried to impose Catholicism on British people. Majority of them were Protestants. People started a revolution against the King with limited ends. But it brought in many important changes in the British political system. The King was overthrown. He somehow escaped from the wrath of the people and went to France. In 1689 William and Mary were coronated as the British King and Queen. But they didn't have absolute powers. The new system was a limited monarchy. the Parliament enjoyed the real powers and Crown had nominal powers. It was the beginning of Parliamentary democracy. All these important changes occurred without any bloodshed on either side therefore it was known as the GLORIOUS

REVOLUTION.

John Locke was closely associated with the Glorious revolution. He had a liberal family background. His father was a lawyer. He had served the Parliamentary army at the time of Bloody revolution. Locke was born in 1632 in Wrington, a place near Bristol. He completed his study in the Oxford University. He was mainly interested in the social sciences and philosophy. He was selected as the fellow of Oxford University. He taught for some years in the Oxford University. He came into contact with Shaftesbury. Shaftesbury was a liberal politician, he was one of the founders of the Whig Party, now known as the Labour party of Britain. Locke came into contact with practical politics because of his relations with Shaftesbury.

In 1685 a conspiracy of the liberals against the monarch was discovered. Locke was not directly connected with the conspiracy, but he was suspected. Therefore he went to Holland with Shaftesbury. He returned to England in 1689 with William and Mary.

The leaders of the Glorious revolution felt the need of a political philosophy to support their revolution. Locke fulfilled their need. He stated the social contract theory supporting limited government and rights of the people. His book TWO TREATISES ON GOVERNMENT was published in 1690. His other important books are – LETTERS ON TOLERATION (1689) ESSAY CONCERNING HUMAN UNDERSTANDING (1690) SOME THOUGHTS CONCERNING EDUCATION (1693)

In 1695 he played an important role in establishing freedom of press. He died in 1704.

The writings of Locke closed the chapter in relations of religion and politics. Locke completely neglected the importance of religion. Sabine says " Locke met the theological dispute with deadliest weapon – indifference i.e. lack of interest or attention. Personally he was religious and ethically Christian but he was profoundly reasonable and anti dogmatic. For him common sense counted more than logic. He was cautious and willing to remain conservative where circumstances permitted. He was pragmatic and compromising. His philosophy was an occasional performance. With the help of common sense he gathered together the chief convictions in philosophy, politics, morals and education. He was influenced by medieval political thinkers particularly Hooker. The main theme of Hooker's thought was that Government was an essential institution it should have powers but these powers should only be used to protect the rights of the people. Locke contributed to the theory of natural law and natural rights. He interpreted natural law as "claim to innate, indefeasible rights inherent in each individual.

## HUMAN NATURE

According to Hobbes human nature was solitary poor brutish nasty and short. But Locke states that human beings in the state of nature were rational beings. Men were basically good, decent, sympathetic, orderly, tender and lovable. They behaved according to reason. Object of each and every human action was to substitute pleasure for pain.

## STATE OF NATURE

Locke has attacked Hobbes's theory of state of nature. He argued that state of nature was one of peace, goodwill, mutual assistance and preservation. The defect in the state of nature was that it had no organization such as a magistrates written law and fixed penalties.

Every thing in the state of nature that was ever right or wrong was so eternally. There was no positive law. But Locke also says that " Positive law adds nothing to the ethical quality of different kinds of conduct but merely provides an apparatus for effective enforcement " By this he means, moral rules are broader in their application than the rules of positive law and are valid whether the government observes them or not. Moral rights and duties are intrinsic and prior to law.

On this basis he has built up his theory of natural rights, and explained particularly the natural right to property. Locke says Rights are even prior to the primitive society. Society doesn't create the rights and except some limitations it can't regulate them. It exists to protect rights. Right to life, liberty and property were the most important rights according to Locke. He said " They can be limited only to make effective the equally valid claims of another persons to same rights ".

According to Locke Right to property was common in the state of nature. Every one had a right to draw subsistence from whatever nature offers. The Roman medieval political thought has also not given much importance to private property. But Locke said that " Man has a natural right to that with which he has mixed the labour of his body. e.g. tilling of land. He had a strong belief that productivity will be greater in private agricultural economy than in the system of

community farming. Greater production would raise the standard of living of the community. Right to private property exists because by labour man extends his own personality into the objects produced. Their utility depends upon the labour expended upon them. Later on this theory became the basis of labour theory of value in classical and socialist economics.

## THE CONTRACT

This was the condition in state of nature. After describing it and explaining the natural right to property, he proceeded to derive civil society from the consent of its members. He says civil power can arise only by consent and it must be the consent of each individual for himself. Civil power can have no right except it is derived from the individual right of each man to protect himself and his property.

Power of the government is nothing but the natural power of the individual resigned into the hands of the community. The power of the government is justified because it is a better way of protecting natural rights than self help.

Locke has not made it clear that whether there were two separate contracts and what was the result of each contract. But from his overall theory it can be said that he assumed two social contracts. By the first contract the civil society or the community was formulated. By the first the individual resigned their rights to the community.

He gave less importance to formation of government. The form of government depends upon the will of the majority. For him legislative power was supreme in the government. The executive may share the power of law making. But both executive and legislative powers are limited they can never be arbitrary. Government rules according to law. It can't delegate its legislative power. It can't take property without consent. People have supreme power to alter the legislature when it acts contrary to the trust reposed in it. The executive power is further limited because the executive depends upon the legislature. Executive and legislative powers should not be concentrated in same hands. Separation of executive and legislative power protects liberty.

Government can't be based merely on power. It can't derive its power merely from conquest or from success in use of force. Moral recognition and force are two different things. Moral recognition can't be gained by the use of force. A government can be justified only if it supports moral rights. Moral order is permanent. Government is only one factor in the moral order. Government can be dissolved for two reasons 1) Change in the location of legislative power 2) Violation of the trust of the people by the government i.e. even if the legislature violates the trust, people have the power to dismiss it and form a new legislature.

Limitations of his social contract – Locke has not given full powers in the hands of the people. The legislative power was the result of delegation of power from the majority, but once the power is delegated people can't have power so long as the government is faithful to its duties. Legislative power of the people was limited. In fact they only had the power to elect the legislature. This shows that Locke was the most conservative of revolutionaries. His main purpose was to defend the moral right of revolution.

Circumstances made him a defender of revolution. But by nature he was not a radical. Locke's political philosophy was an effort to combine the past and present. His basic interest was the individual and his rights – particularly that of property. He

believed in the wisdom of the majority. He never feared that like a King the majority can also become tyrant.

## AGE OF REASON AND REACTION

### JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU ( 1712 – 1778 )

After the revolution of 1688 there was a period of stagnation in the British political thought. Its temper became conservative because the British government was comparatively more liberal than other European governments. In the 18th century political theory had its centre in France. The last 30 years of XIVth Louis' rule from 1685 to 1715 were the years of decadence of the monarchical absolute government. The decadence turned French philosophy once more in the direction of political and social theory. Interest in politics began in last years of 17th century and grew steadily. Between 1750 and Revolution every branch of literature became a vehicle of social discussion. e.g. Voltaire a poet, Rousseau – a novelist, Diderot – a scientist, Turgot – a civil servant, Holbach – a metaphysician, Montesquieu – a sociologist all contributed to political theory. But most of the discussion was in the form of old idea in a new setting. The ideas had a popularistic tone. They lacked logical clarity. Most of the ideas were based on the philosophy of Locke but no doubt there were some differences.

But Rousseau stands apart from all these popular trends. He was modern. His philosophy was different both in its quality and its effects. It was differently related to revolution. It was vague but significant. Rousseau said any man who could doubt his honesty deserved the gibbet. Rousseau differed from his contemporaries in everything but his opinions; even when he used the same words he meant something different. His character, his outlook on life, his scale of values, his instinctive reactions, all differed essentially from what the enlightenment regarded as admirable. From 1744 to 1756 he was in Paris with the people who wrote the Encyclopedia but they didn't feel Rousseau's presence. His political and philosophical writings are the result of his complex and unhappy personality. He had a divided personality morbidity towards sex and religion. " My tastes and thoughts always seem to fluctuate between the noble and the base. He had a sense of sin and fear of damnation. " I easily forget my misfortunes but I can't forget my faults.

Rousseau had a passionate feeling that men are naturally good but it was less an intellectual conviction than a reversal of his innate fear that he was bad. By criticising the society he was able to satisfy himself. Because of the nature of his personality he had no satisfaction in his work and confidence in its value. He was parasitic and for a considerable period he lived in a state of semidependence. But he could never accept



dependence gracefully. He built around himself a myth of self sufficiency and Stoicism. ( Stoic – Ancient Greek school which believed that virtue is the greatest good stressed on control of one's passions and feelings. ) In taste and morals he represented the sentimentality of the lower middle class. He was interested in homely things, was terrified of science and art, distrusted polished manners sentimentalized common place virtues and gave importance to sense over intelligence.

### THE REVOLT AGAINST REASON

Rousseau projected the contradictions of his own personality upon the society. But he didn't appeal to reason. He used the contrast to attack upon reason. He was against intelligence, growth of knowledge and progress of science. He said common emotions. Particularly instincts give value to life. In case of instincts men differ hardly at all. They exist in purer form, in the simple uneducated man than in enlightened and sophisticated. " A thinking man is a depraved animal. " According to him the important feelings were life, the joy and beauty of motherhood the satisfactions of the homely arts, the universal feeling of religious reverence, sense of a common lot, sharing of common life. Science is a fruit of idle curiosity. Philosophy was skillful use of literary style. The amenities of polite

life are tinsel. " Philosophers smile contemptuously at patriotism, religion, and consecrate their talents to the destruction of all that men hold sacred ". Intelligence is dangerous because it undermines reverence, science is destructive because it takes away faith, Reason is bad because it sets prudence against moral intuition. Without reverence faith and moral intuition there is neither character nor society.

The enormous importance of Rousseau lies in the fact that he carried philosophy with him against its own tradition. He tried to present the surpassing value of moral will as compared with scientific enquiry. Rousseau's philosophy was against the philosophy of traditional liberalism. He denied that rational self interest was a reputable virtue and excluded prudence from the list of moral virtues. The result was a more radical doctrine of equality. His democracy needed very little personal liberty. It gives more importance to reverence for the authority of tradition and custom.

### MAN AS CITIZEN

Rousseau was against Locke's systematic individualism. It was based on happiness of the individual and self satisfaction. He also criticised Hobbes for similar thoughts. He was influenced by the philosophy of Plato. He adopted his general outlook – Political subjection is ethical and secondarily a matter of law and power. Community

itself is the moralizing agency. The individual receives all his powers and rights from the society therefore the fundamental moral category is not man but citizen.

## NATURE AND SIMPLE LIFE

In his DISCOURSE OF INEQUALITY he attacked the institution of private property. He said the state must be the sole owner. But he was not a communist. In an article he referred to property as the most sacred of all the rights of citizenship. But he had no serious idea of abolishing private property. He simply wanted to state that right to property is the right within the community and not against it.

Over and above self interest men have an innate revulsion against suffering in others. The common basis of sociability is not reason but feeling. Men are naturally good. The calculating egoist in the theories exists no in nature but only in a perverted society. Philosophers know the citizens but they do not know what the natural man is. History also can't answer. A hypothetical picture shows that

natural man was an animal whose behaviour was instinctive. He lacked language, there were no thoughts and ideas. Natural man was neither moral nor vicious neither happy nor unhappy. He had no property because property resulted from ideas, foreseen wants, knowledge, industry, selfishness, taste, regard for the opinion of others, the arts, war, slavery, vice, conjugal and paternal affection all exist in men.

He believed that the existing French society was an instrument of exploitation. Poverty of one class contributes to parasitic luxury of other class. Rousseau dreamed to set an ideal society against the existing perverted society, a just mean between primitive indolence and civilized egoism. But he believed that some kind of society is the only moralising force in human life. He said the body politic is also a moral being. It possesses a will – the general will. The tendency to form society is universal; wherever individuals have a common interest they form a society. Every society has a general will which regulates the conduct of its members. The theory of GENERAL WILL has been stated in Paradoxes.

His social contract has nothing to do with the rights and powers of the government. Government is merely the agent of people, therefore it can't be the subject of a contract. The GENERAL WILL represented a unique fact about a community – it has a collective good which is not the same thing as the private interests of its members.

## THE PARADOX OF FREEDOM

The social contract gives the body politic absolute power over all its members. Each man alienates, " I admit, by the social contract only such part of his powers, goods and liberty as it is important for the community to control. He said that rights of any sort require social recognition and can be defended only in terms of a

common good. There are no individual rights at all. He said real coercion never occurs in the society and that what is considered coercion is only apparently so. Even a criminal wills his own punishment. Whoever refuses to obey the general will shall be compelled to do so by the whole body. This means he will be forced to free. Coercion is not really coercion – When a man individually wants something different from what the social order gives him he is merely capricious and doesn't rightly know his own good or his own desires. Restricting liberty is really increasing it. But these principles are against freedom of conscience. It is a

social good, and not merely an individual good. Forcing a man to be free is an euphemism for making him blindly obedient to the mass or the strongest party.

The general will is always right. It stands for the social good. What is not right is merely not the general will.

## THE SOCIAL CONTRACT

People felt the need of the social contract because growing population and advancing civilisation brought evils. The social contract was a process by which each man merged his natural rights into a common authority or general will. What he lost was his natural liberty. What he gained was civil liberty. To this agreement the government was not a party. Final authority always remained in the hands of the people, the sovereign power was unlimited. The government was merely an agent to carry out the general will. Representative government was also undesirable to him. He preferred the system of direct democracy. He clearly distinguished between the state and the government. He particularly destroyed the legal nature of the authority by making it identical with public opinion.

The social contract of Rousseau was different from that of Hobbes and Locke. It was a continuous process. It involves continuous consent of the individuals. Rousseau used the theory for advocating popular sovereignty. He said it was a contract between the individuals and the community as whole. But this is a fallacy. In reality it was a contract between the individuals. It was unilateral, there was no other party. Hobbes's social contract created an absolute monarch, Locke's social contract created a limited government. But Rousseau's social contract created a community

having popular sovereignty. The people were themselves sovereign. But they had this power only as the member of the community and not as individuals.

The will of the whole community is known as the General will. According to Rousseau every individual has two types of wills – the actual will and the real will. The actual will is selfish. It compels the individual to think about his own interest. It is not permanent, it is not based on reason. The real will is rational selfless, and permanent. It thinks about the common good of the people. The general will is the aggregation of the real wills, it is more than that. It is the organisation and synthesis of all real wills.

Rousseau has stated the theory of general will in abstract terms. It is an ideal philosophical statement but in actual practice it has been misused. It can be interpreted in many ways as it is not stated in clear terms. What is the exact meaning of General Will? Rousseau has variedly answered this question. Sometimes he said general will deals only with general questions and not with particular persons and actions. Some times he said the general will is the decision of the majority – this implies that the majority is always right. Sometimes he said general will registered itself automatically by making differences of opinion cancel each other. The theory of general will has greatly diminished the importance of government. Sovereign power belongs only to the people as a corporate body while government is merely an agent having delegated powers. Sovereignty can't be represented therefore the only free government is direct democracy.

## GERMAN ROMANTICISM

### GEORGE WILHELM FREDERICK HEGEL

(1770 – 1831 )

GWF Hegel, this name is more closely related to philosophy in general than Political Philosophy. Hegel was regarded as a great mystic philosopher. During his times it was considered that Hegel will discover the ultimate truth. Hegel represented the philosophy of 18th and 19th century. His influence is felt even in the 20th century. He introduced a revolution in the study of Philosophy.

### LIFE AND TIMES

In the 17th century the middle class capitalists revolted against the monarchs and took over power in their own hands. The first such revolution occurred in Britain. The event was repeated in France in the 18th century. The Liberal state came into existence. Individual liberty was the characteristic feature of the liberal state. The

Rationalist school of thought supporting the liberal state was propounded by Hobbes, Locke and many other important European thinkers. Jeremy Bentham developed the philosophy of Utilitarianism. The theory believed in supremacy of reason. To achieve the greatest good of the greatest number of people was the main principle of this theory. It also believed that all human beings try to seek pleasure and avoid pains. As the result of these individualist and utilitarian philosophies the importance of the state was considerably reduced and the supremacy of Reason was overemphasised. As a further consequence of weakening of the state, societies were disintegrated, they were leading towards anarchy. A vacuum was created. There was a need of a strong uniting force. Rousseau tried to introduce a new trend in Philosophy. He criticised the supremacy of Reason. He explained the limitations of Reason and gave importance to natural instincts. For him thinkers were the most corrupt human beings. Free unplanned and dangerous life based on natural instincts to planned restricted and secure life based on reason was more preferable to him. His philosophy was known as Romanticism. Hegel's philosophy was influenced by all these trends. He criticised extreme individualism and utilitarianism. He favoured a powerful state authority, he was influenced by Rousseau's romanticism but considered it unscientific. The particular situation in Germany was also influenced Hegel's philosophy. Germany was disintegrated. There was a need to integrate the various parts of Germany. Hegel felt the need of national unification.

Hegel was born in Stuttgart in 1770 in a well to do family. His father was a revenue officer. His mother was also well educated. She taught him Latin even before he joined the school. His father wanted to make him a Church father. Hegel was not at all interested in that field. He was fascinated by philosophy. He studied Philosophy in Tubingen and received the Ph.D. degree at the age of twenty years. He learnt theology but criticised the orthodox approach of Christian Church to study theology. He was impressed by the French Revolution and its outcome but later on criticised the ideas of the French Revolution. He worked as a Professor at Heidelberg. He ascended to the post of Head of the department of Philosophy at the Berlin University. He was recognised as the official philosopher of Berlin – the state of Prussia. His main works are

- 1) Phenomenology of Spirit ( 1807 )
- 2) Philosophy of Right ( 1821 )
- 3) Philosophy of History ( 1837 )

## THE DIALECTIC

Hegel followed the historical method of studying Philosophy. He had a fascination for history. He considered history as the unfolding of the ' Spirit ' He describes the concept of SPIRIT with the help of various epithets. Some times he uses the term IDEA sometimes REASON or sometimes THE UNIVERSAL MIND. All the terms mean the same concept.

According to Hegel THE UNIVERSAL MIND or the SPIRIT is the only reality in the Universe. Everything in the world originates from the UNIVERSAL MIND everything is the creation of the universal mind. Matter which represents all the living and nonliving things in the world is not real. It is the reflection of the UNIVERSAL MIND. The relationship between the Universal Mind and Matter is not antithetical. The Universal Mind is supreme and Sovereign in the world. The universal mind is unfolding itself to achieve self consciousness hence the history of the world means the unfolding of the SPIRIT or the UNIVERSAL MIND. In the initial stages the UNIVERSAL MIND was ignorant. Gradually it learned more and more about itself. It acquired self knowledge through the process of evolution. This process of evolution did not take place in a linear fashion. It took place in a zig zag manner. The UNIVERSAL MIND started the process by creating a thesis. The thesis itself had the seeds of an antithesis. During the process of development the antithesis developed along with the thesis. Because of opposite characteristics naturally there was a conflict between the thesis and the antithesis. The perennial elements both from the thesis and the antithesis remained intact and other transient elements were eliminated. The perennial elements fused together and the synthesis was produced. The process is still continuing and it will continue till the UNIVERSAL MIND reveals self consciousness. Therefore the process of development is a chain process. The synthesis represents a higher stage. It will act as the thesis again the antithesis will develop and the process will continue.

According to Hegel this process of development is inevitable and full of conflict. All developments in the world are governed by this process. The social, economic and political activities of the human beings are governed by this inevitable process. They are the part of this major process of development. They are not independent. Therefore individual leaders are not so much important. They can at the most shape some minor events in history. The human intellect and human Reason are very limited factors. They can't grasp fully the enormous events taking place in the world. Individuals are mere actors directed by the Universal Mind towards a particular end.

Where do the universal mind directs the individuals and the society and the material world? What is the ultimate aim of the universal mind ? It wants to achieve self consciousness. Self consciousness is attained when the state is created. Hence the ultimate and highest aim of the human society is to create the state. Individuals are very much selfish. Their self centredness goes on decreasing as they form the

family, clan, tribe, society and finally the state. The State represents the universal human society. HISTORY IS THE RECORD OF THE MARCH OF THE SPIRIT THROUGH THE WORLD according to Hegel.

With the help of this new method of analysis i.e. The Dialectic, Hegel completely reconstructed the modern thought. Hegel faced the problem of opposition between order of nature conceived by science and by Christian religion. Other thinkers had sharpened this difference. They used the analytical method. To divide and conquer is the main principle of the analytical method. Hegel's principle was totally against the analytical principle. Synthesis was his watchword. The dialectical method – a threefold pattern of development 1) a period of natural happy youthful but largely unconscious spontaneity 2) a period of painful frustration and self consciousness in which the spirit is turned inward and loses its spontaneous creativity. 3) a period in which it returns to itself at a higher level embodying the insights gained from frustration in a new era which unites freedom with authority and self discipline e.g. The Greek city in its creative period represents the first stage; Socrates and Christianity the second and the period of Protestantism and the Germanic nations beginning with Reformation, the third.

Synthesis is not a compromise between thesis and antithesis. It doesn't mean outright victory of the either element therefore there is no break with the past. Hegel favoured contradictions. Progress is not possible without contradiction and conflict. Contradictions are removed by the UNIVERSAL MIND. It is the driving force. Men can't control this force. Old orders are collapsed. There is chaos and anarchy for some time. But it is a transient phase. Ultimately it will lead to prosperity. Hegel said " The history of the world is not the theatre of happiness, periods of happiness are blank pages in it, they are periods when the antithesis is in abeyance.

## THEORY OF STATE

Hegel regarded the state as unique among other institutions. He discussed the relationship between the individuals and the institutions and between the institutions and state in his book PHILOSOPHY OF RIGHT. His theory of state reflects the German political experience. It is contradictory to the French and British philosophy of individualism. It gives less importance to the individual. Hegel says that state comes into being when there arise a genuine public authority higher in any kind than the civil society. It represents the higher level of personal self realization. It is a form of society in which the modern man rises to new height of freedom. It will be the unique achievement of the modern civilisation. It combines the highest authority with the highest degree and form of freedom for its citizens. State overrules the anarchy of the civil society. It is the only genuine moral factor in the entire social process. As the

state is the only moral element it must be absolute. While stating the theory of state Hegel has explained the nature of family and civil society.

#### FAMILY:-

Hegel says that in family ethical life is in its natural phase. Its not a contract. Interaction among the members of the family is spontaneous and natural. Family relations are full of love emotion and attachment. Family members have others interest in their mind. Everybody is ready to sacrifice. Family relations are based on altruistic feelings. But the altruism in family is limited. The selfless activities are limited to a fixed sphere.

#### CIVIL SOCIETY:-

Universal egoism is its chief characteristic. One treats everybody else as a means to his ends. Motive behind helping others is to achieve profit. Relationship is contractual. Everyone furthers his self interest. The civil society is a differentiated and institutionalised sphere. For different functions there are different institutions. The civil society is the child of modern world. Human beings have unlimited needs. This feature encourages consumerism. To meet the increased demand of the consumers production is increased. Civil society enters the stage of mass production and consumption. On the other side poverty increased. But besides all its defects civil society is a necessary stage to achieve the ideal state.

#### THE STATE:-

Universal altruism is the main characteristic of state. Our inner desire to help others is reflected in the institution of the state. In the state there would be unity of subjective consciousness and objective order.

While discussing the relations between the state and the civil society Hegel says it is full of contrast and mutual dependence. State is not an utilitarian institution performing social welfare and administrative functions. These functions are performed by the civil society. The state may guide these activities but it doesn't itself perform them. Civil society depends upon the state for intelligent direction, supervision and moral significance. The state depends upon the civil society for the means of accomplishing the moral purposes which it embodies. The state is not the means but the end. It represents the rational ideal. The power of the state is absolute but not arbitrary.

### FREEDOM AND AUTHORITY



The national state combines the highest authority with the highest degree and form of freedom for its citizens. Hegel believed that freedom is a social phenomenon. It is the property of the social system, which arises through the moral development of the community. It is not an individual property. Therefore it can't be equated with self will or the following of private inclinations. Freedom consists in the adjustment of inclination and individual capacity to the performance of socially significant work. No claim to liberty can be morally defended except as desire coincides with some phase of the general good and is supported by the general will. The individuals rights and liberties are those which correspond to the duties imposed by his station in the society. In the state negative freedom of self will is supplanted by the real freedom of citizenship. The individual attains moral dignity and freedom only as he devotes himself to the service of the state. Hegel's theory of freedom implied nothing definite in the way of civil or political liberties. The idealisation of the state and the low moral estimate of civil society, however combined to make political authoritarianism inevitable.

## BUREAUCRACY

Hegel had a special regard for the bureaucratic class. He considered it as an universal class. He said Bureaucrats work for the society without any selfish interest. They are completely selfless. They are the only class fit to rule. The society should help the members of this class to perform their routine functions, so that they can concentrate on their main activity.

## FORM OF GOVERNMENT

Hegel favoured a constitutional government. The monarch should be elected to power and his authority should be limited by the constitution, which has grown as the result of the long and gradual process of evolution. The legislators should be elected on the basis of functional representation. But Hegel has not explained his plan about the form of government in detail.

## HEGEL ON WAR

Protection of the territory and welfare of the population is the primary function of the state. All independent states are sovereign, hence when the problems between the two states are not solved with the help of agreement . War is the only alternative. Victory in the war is a matter of life and death for the state. The citizens must be prepared to satisfy their lives and properties for the sake of the state.

Hegel's conception of war differs from the general conception of war. He does not regard it as evil. Attaining peace and order is not a goal of state. Peace leads to stagnation. It gives birth to corruption hence a nation can be purified only by a war – the blowing of the wind preserves the sea from foulness caused by prolonged calm.

War is virtuous activity. It fosters patriotism self sacrifice, courage and bravery among the citizens.

Hegel's views about war are logical conclusions of his general theory. War has a place in the dialectical process, which ensures progress only through conflict. The SPIRIT is making its way through history for reaching the highest goal of ultimate truth. No single state could help the SPIRIT to reach the ultimate truth. Different dominant states helped the Spirit to carry forward. The dominant people emerge only when there is a war between states. War thus plays an important part in the world history. The successful state is the true personification of the world Spirit rather than the defeated nation. However, the victorious state is never conscious of its destiny.

Hegel says that there should be nothing personal in the war. It should be restricted to the soldiers and it should be conducted as humanly as possible.

### CRITICISM

The primary point of criticism levelled against Hegel's philosophy is that it is stated in abstract terms. Many technical words such as VOLK, FOLK, GEIST, IDEA, SPIRIT has been used. At different points they convey different meanings. Much confusion has been created while translating his literature in English.

Hegel has explained his concept of the STATE . He has idealised the state. He consider the state as the only moral authority and therefore confers all final powers to the state. He was describing the STATE which was the part of his ideal system and not the existing German state. He was criticised for praising the German state. Dictators all over the world have misused his theory of state to justify their absolutist and arbitrary rules. This is possible because of the abstract nature Hegel's philosophy. Secondly he has given much importance to the IDEA

or the UNIVERSAL MIND. He says it is the only driving force behind all activities in the world. But in practice IDEA can't be the sole driving force. Matter also plays a decisive role. Hegel has given less importance to individual freedom. One of his aims of stating the idealist theory was to criticise the individualist and utilitarian theories and to establish the supremacy of the state authority. But while attempting this Hegel has totally neglected individual freedom. He says real freedom consists in obeying the

orders of the state. Hegel's views on war are also controversial. He glorifies war. He considers it inevitable. He says that if there is no agreement between two sovereign states war is the only way to resolve the conflict. Of course his views about war are part and parcel of his broader philosophy. They should be conceived from that point of view. Hegel failed to clearly distinguish between the state and society.

## 19TH CENTURY LIBERALISM

### JOHN STUART MILL

(1806 – 1873)

Liberalism represents the important landmark in the development of political theory in the modern period. It signifies the transfer of power from the monarchs i.e. the upper class of the society to the bourgeoisie i.e. the middle class. In the initial stages it was a movement of the middle class against the monarchies. It had economic and social facets also. The origin of the liberal theory can be traced to the Glorious revolution of 1688 in England. Locke is regarded as the first liberal theoretician. Later on L. T. Hobhouse wrote a book LIBERALISM explaining political liberalism. THE WEALTH OF NATIONS written by Adam Smith and the economic theory stated by Ricardo explains the economic aspect of liberalism. The American war of independence and the French revolution were the important land marks of liberalism in the 18th century. The liberal movement in initial stages or the classical liberalism helped the destruction of monarchies and establishment of liberal democracies. It restricted the power of the state. It gave importance to individual liberty. It believed in supremacy of reason. The individualist and utilitarian philosophies are the offshoots of liberalism.

## MODERN LIBERALISM

In the 19th century the liberal philosophy underwent a major shift. Governmental interference in social and economic matters was welcomed. The reasons for the decline of classical liberalism were –

- 1) Growth of private monopolies and consequent increase in the exploitation of workers.
- 2) Awakening of the Proletariat.
- 3) Rise of the socialist doctrine.

In England the early years of 19th century the Royal commission was appointed to investigate the coal mining industry. Its report shocked all Englishmen. It revealed the brutality and exploitation that existed in the mines. As a result there was a steady increase in social legislation. Political rights were extended to the workers. The English Liberal philosophy was also affected by these events. It developed into a national political movement. It did not remain the spokesman of middle class industrial interests. There was a through revision in the liberal theory. J. S. Mill was one of the important contributors, the others being Herbert Spencer, T. H. Green. J. S. Mill is regarded as a modern liberal thinker. He revised utilitarianism and the conception of personal liberty. He gave utmost regard to individual liberty.

## BIOGRAPHY

He was born in 1806. He was the eldest son of a compelling and aggressive father – James Mill. James Mill was the companion of Bentham and a staunch utilitarian. He had certain ideas about the intellectual development of his child. He vigorously followed his ideas. In other words John Stuart Mill was the victim of his father's fancies during his childhood. He learnt Greek at 3 years of age. At eight he read original Aesop's fables, Plato, Herodotus and English history. He was also teaching his younger brothers. At the age of 12 he studied Aristotle's logical treatment. His intellect was burdened. He was suffocated. He breathed in the free air for the first time in his life when at the age of 14 he went to France. There he took interest in poetry and tried to compensate the backlog of emotional development. At the age of 16 he founded the Utilitarian society. Later on he found a job in the East India Company. He retired from the company in 1858 at the age of 52. He had a love affair with Harriet Taylor. She was also a well recognised thinker having concern for the liberation of women. She profoundly influenced Mill's philosophy. Unfortunately both had a short married life of only seven years. She died in 1858. At the age of 59 Mill entered into practical politics. He was elected as a Member of Parliament. He refused to concentrate on local problems. He was more interested in national politics and important international issues. As a result he was defeated when he contested the same post for second time.

His important works include :-

- 1) ESSAY ON LIBERTY (1859)
- 2) THE CONSIDERATIONS OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT (1861)
- 3) THE UTILITARIANISM (1861)

#### 4) THE SUBJECTION OF WOMEN (1869)

#### 5) THE PARLIAMENTARY REFORM

#### 6) AUTOBIOGRAPHY (1873)

#### 7) THREE ESSAYS ON RELIGION (1874)

His thoughts on utilitarianism, personal liberty, representation, representative government, democracy are significant.

### UTILITARIANISM

Jeremy Bentham put forth this hedonistic theory. (hedonism :- belief in pleasure as the proper aim.) He stated it in the 18th century. In his book FRAGMENT ON GOVERNMENT published in 1776 he stated the general outline of utilitarian thinking. It was based on greatest happiness of the greatest number principle. Every man acts to seek pleasure and avoid pain. Nothing is inherently good or bad, it depends upon whether it provides pain or pleasure. The desire for one's own greatest pleasure is individual's only motive and the greatest happiness of everyone is at once the standard of social good and the object of moral action. Bentham said that the State is an utilitarian institution. Pleasures and pains can be mathematically calculated on the basis of their intensity, duration certainty and the remoteness of time at which it will occur. He said " Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters – pain and pleasure. It is for them alone to point out what we ought to do as well as to determine what we shall do. On the one hand the standard of right and wrong on the other the chain of causes and effects are fastened to their throne ". This theory reduced the importance of state. It also neglected moral principles – it gave importance to utility.

### MILL'S UTILITARIANISM

Mill altered some principles of Utilitarianism. He said pleasures differ in quality. His famous statement express his ideas. " It is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied, better to be a Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied, and if the fool and the pig are of different opinion it is because they only know their side of the question – the other party knows both the sides ". Thus he differed himself from Bentham's pronouncement that " pushpin is as good as poetry if it gives one the same pleasure ". He said pleasures can't be measured objectively. Personal experience reveals their intensity. Mill further said that dignity of man is the final aim of human life. Good life is something more than the life devoted to pleasure. Happiness of

others, morality are more important principles. Mill abandoned egoism. He assumed that social welfare is a matter of concern to all men of good will. He regarded freedom, integrity, self respect and personal distinction as intrinsic goods apart from their contribution to happiness. Thought and investigation, discussion, self controlled moral judgment and action were goods in their own right. Mill defended popular government because it produces and gives scope to a high type of moral character. Bentham wanted to establish similarity between personal and public interest. Hence he prescribed some external sanctions for constraining individual to promote general happiness of the people. Mill disagreed with Bentham on this principle. He said identity of personal and public interests created by artificial means of external sanctions couldn't be permanent.

### MILL ON LIBERTY

The most important contribution of Mill to political thought was the essay ON LIBERTY written in 1859. It struck a new note in utilitarian literature. For Mill freedom of thought and investigation, discussion, self controlled moral judgement and action were goods in their own right. He believed that intellectual and moral freedom are beneficial to both the society that permits them and the individual that enjoys them. He said freedom of judgement is an inherent quality of morally mature personality and therefore the liberal society should recognise that right and make the provision of necessary institutions. He said loss of liberty and restrictions by state causes regimentation of the society. Regimentation creates dwarfs and dwarfs are in no way useful for the development of the state or in building a strong nation. Hence individual liberty should be given utmost importance. Difference of opinion should be tolerated. Even a single voice of dissent should be heard. All mankind has no right to silence the dissenter.

He said " To hear public questions discussed freely, to have a share in political decisions, to have moral convictions, to take the responsibility for making them effective are among the ways in which reasonable human beings are produced. It is not certain that it will serve the ultimate end but still it is an intrinsically humane, civilized kind of character. His argument about liberty was not addressed to the state but to the society. ON LIBERTY was an appeal for a public opinion. Mill felt that the chief threat to liberty was not the government but the majority that is intolerant of the unconventional, that looks with suspicion on divergent minorities and is willing to use the weight of numbers to repress and regiment them. Previous thinkers have not considered this problem. Mill recognised that behind a popular government there must be a liberal society. Political institutions are part of a larger social context which largely determines the way in which they work. Society is an important factor in

relationship between the individual and the government and in securing individuals liberty. He realized that individualism of early liberal theory was inadequate.

Mill's theory of liberty indicated the fear that democratizing the society and individual distinction are incompatible. Both can't be achieved simultaneously. In a democratic society the individual can't concentrate fully on self interest. He has to care for the welfare of the society. He valued women's liberty, he advocated providing voting right to the women. But he never faced the problems of individual freedom that are peculiar feature of an industrial society, or the problem of workers freedom.

Mill defined freedom as " absence of restraints " Later on Laski had criticised this definition because it is negative. A definition should express the positive aspects of the concept which it defines. Considering the shortcomings of the above definition Mill further analysed the concept of liberty. He accepts that some kind of restrictions on human conduct are necessary. There is a difference in thought and action. He argues that there should be absolute freedom in the realm of thought. But he divides actions as self regarding and other regarding. Self regarding actions mean the actions because of which the society is not affected and other regarding actions mean the activities that affect other human beings. Mill argued that individuals should enjoy absolute freedom in the matters of self regarding actions and the state can put proper restrictions in case of other regarding actions.

In practice the classification of activities under the categories of self regarding and other regarding is very difficult and every human action affects the society in a particular way. The following example will clarify the difficulty. If a person drinks liquor of his own money and enjoys himself without troubling any other person, according to Mill this is a self regarding action and therefore there should be no restrictions on it. But if the same person is famous e.g. a film actor then his activities will be trend setting. Persons who even couldn't afford their daily meals will start drinking, only because of the influence of the general trend. This will create further complications. Indirectly the actor is responsible to all these happenings.

Mill never analysed the relationship between freedom and responsibility. He regarded prohibition of the sale of liquor as an infringement of liberty.

## REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT

## DEMOCRACY

Mill assigned a positive role for the state. He said the state should remove obstacles in development. State is human creation. Human will is its basis. It is neither natural nor artificial. It has a natural growth but not like a tree. He said that the state must provide compulsory education, it should regulate business activities. He abandoned economic laissez faire. He accepted the need for social

legislation but only on humanitarian grounds. He rejected the concept of natural laws both political and economic and the dogma of self regulating competitive economic system. Like liberals in general he retained a considerable suspicion of government. He preferred individual initiative. While considering the importance of individual liberty against the authority of government he says liberty is not only an individual good but a social good. To silence an opinion by force does violence to the person who holds and also robs society of the advantage it might have had from a free investigation and criticism of opinion.

Legislation should be used as a means of creating, increasing and equalising opportunity. Therefore the liberal state should be positive in its approach.

Mill gave importance to minority representation. He considered the majority representation system as inadequate for representing the minorities. He devised the new method of proportional representation by single transferable vote. He prescribed educational qualifications for voters. At least they should be able to read, write and perform some basic operations of arithmetic. He suggested plural voting for tax payers and intellectuals, because they are responsible persons. He also criticised the secret ballot system, instead he supported the open ballot system. He said ignorant people are misled and misguided in the secret ballot system therefore voting should be open and the intellectuals in the society should guide the ignorant voters who are unable to arrive at a proper decision without the help of others. Parliament should act as a supervising and controlling body. Legislation should follow more systematic methods. Parliament should appoint

a committee on legislation. The election expenses should be borne by the government.

## CRITICISM

Mill is mainly criticised because of his wavering and inconsistent theory. He had significantly contributed to the theory of Utilitarianism. " As a logician, economist, and political philosopher he was regarded as a prophet in his own age ". He was the champion of individual liberty, a great feminist. He valued moral standards, he was a man of conviction. As a thinker J.S. Mill is an enigma. He was a utilitarian who



undermined the creed, a hedonist who taught the importance of self sacrifice, a democrat who distrusted democracy, a liberal who admired social regulation to some extent, a man who supported liberty without caring for equality. But he was no doubt one of the greatest political thinkers of all times.

## KARL MARX (1818 – 1883)

Karl Marx had and still has fanatical and uncompromising supporters on one hand and equally militant opponents on the other hand. In his life time and afterwards he was equally worshiped and cursed by opposite groups. The exploited class regarded him as a Messiah and the exploiter class regarded him as their number one enemy. It was natural because throughout his life he was anti-establishment. He wanted to change the world. With the help of his penetrating analysis he had arrived at a conclusion that the root cause of all problems is the Establishment, and hence it should be changed with the help of any available means, if necessary a violent bloody revolution. To change the world was the only mission of his life. He said, " Philosophers have explained the world but the problem is to change it ". He was a deterministic thinker. He argued that with the help of proper methods of analysis social dynamics can be understood. He further argued that the exploited classes should learn to master these forces of change and should destroy the society based on inequality to create an egalitarian society- the COMMUNIST SOCIETY.

Marx was a systematic and logical thinker. But he was more interested in application of his thought to practice. Lenin experimented with the Marxian philosophy in Russia. Half of the world was influenced by the Russian experiment. It continued for seventy years but unfortunately met with a sad end in 1990. What are the causes of the failure ? The liberals point towards the basic defects in Marxist philosophy whereas the Marxists regard it as a practical failure and not a defect in the system of thought. Brief analysis of Marx's thought will help us, to some extent, to know the truth in the Liberal and Marxist claims.

## LIFE AND TIMES

Karl Marx was born in 1818 in Germany in a Jew family. When he completed six years of his age his family adopted Christianity. Marx was not at all interested in religion. He completed his University education at Berlin University. He specialised in History and Philosophy. He was very much influenced by Hegel's philosophy. After completing his education because of his anti establishment nature he can't have a good job. He started working as a freelance journalist. because of his highly critical articles against the government he had to leave Germany. He migrated to France. In Paris he came into contact with Proudhon, Bakunin, Mazzini and Engles who was his

life time friend, philosopher and guide. Because of his activities he met with same fate in Paris. He migrated to Brussels. Again came back to Paris. There he was involved in the workers movement. In 1848 the workers made an unsuccessful attempt to revolt. Marx left Paris and spent some years in Germany. Finally he settled in England. He died in 1883. He suffered from acute poverty throughout his life. He had to gather money for the funeral of his dead daughter by writing articles. There is no doubt that all these adverse conditions had an impact on his philosophy.

His important works are :-

- 1) THE POVERTY OF PHILOSOPHY
- 2) CAPITAL VOL. I, II AND III
- 3) THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO

Marx called his own theory as SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM. He described the socialism of Robert Owen, Charles Fourier and Saint Simon as Utopian Socialism. He said that these thinkers had altruistic objectives but they couldn't grasp the ground realities and therefore they were Utopians.

There is very little in philosophy of Marx which can be attributed as the original thought of Marx. He collected his bricks from many mason's yards. He was mainly influenced by Hegel's concept of dialectics. He was also influenced by British school of Political Economy particularly Smith and Ricardo.

Marxian Philosophy can be summarised under the following titles :-

- 1) DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM
- 2) MATERIALISTIC INTERPRETATION OF HISTORY  
OR HISTORICAL MATERIALISM
- 3) CLASS STRUGGLE
- 4) THEORY OF SURPLUS VALUE
- 5) THEORY OF STATE AND REVOLUTION

DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM

Marx was basically interested in understanding the process of social change. He explained it with the help of the principle of dialectical materialism. He borrowed this concept from Hegel. Hegel was also interested in the process of historical development. Hegel said that " Human history is the result of the process of unfolding of Spirit." The Spirit experiments with itself. A thesis is created. It gives birth to its opposite that is the antithesis. There is a conflict between thesis and antithesis. As a result both are destroyed and a synthesis is created uniting the genuine elements both from thesis and antithesis. The synthesis represents the higher stage of development. It is a chain process hence the synthesis acts as a thesis it creates its opposite and the inevitable process continues till the ultimate stage is reached. The ultimate stage is the idea fully conscious of itself. According to Hegel the driving force behind this development is the Spirit – the Universal Mind or the Idea. The material world is the reflection of ideas. Marx while using the same logic of thesis antithesis and synthesis refuses to accept the concept of Universal mind or the Spirit. He says there is nothing like a Universal Mind. Matter is the driving force behind all changes. Ideas are mere reflections of matter. They do not have independent existence. They are based on material conditions. i.e. Material conditions shape human life and human ideas and material conditions alone change human life and ideas.

Marx said that the inevitable process of change will continue till the perfectly organized self sufficient and classless society free from exploitation comes into existence. The process is full of struggle and conflict.

## HISTORICAL MATERIALISM

OR

## MATERIALISTIC INTERPRETATION OF HISTORY

Marx turned to philosophy because he was deeply concerned about the miserable condition of the workers. He wanted to explain the cause and effect relationship behind the miserable condition. More importantly he wanted to change the condition. He wanted to create an ideal society. He was not satisfied with superficial causes and remedies.

Marx was the follower of Historical method of philosophy. He believed that human development is a continuous process. The present is related with the past. It is the product of the past. It can't be cut off from the past. It is necessary to consider History to explain the present conditions.

What is History ? Marx interpreted History from a novel point of view. He interpreted history from the materialistic point of view and that is known as his materialistic interpretation of history or historical materialism. He said that the struggle between the nations or the palace coups is not history. It is very limited meaning of history.

Human history and human culture depends upon material things. Ownership of the material things is an important factor shaping human history. Marx said " The mode of production of the material means of existence, conditions the whole process of social, political and intellectual life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their social existence but on the contrary it is their social existence that determines their consciousness. "

Human birth is the result of natural process. To survive man needs food. For securing food he has to 'produce'. Production is a very important process in human life. Analysis of the process of production reveals that the forces of production such as land labour and capital, their ownership and the relations of production resulting from the ownership of forces of production and the mode of production are the important things to be considered.

The forces of production include natural resources like land, water, minerals etc., machinery tools and technique, capital and mental and physical labour. It must be noted that labour is a perishable commodity. It is its major weakness. It has a limited bargaining power. The bargaining power is further decreased because of availability of labourers ready to work on low wages. The other forces of production are comparatively more permanent. The ownership of these means of production determine the relations of production. The owners of land and capital can easily buy labour. Therefore the owners become dominant. Thus two classes are created in the society – the owners of means of production and the persons who sell their labour – the workers.

The mode of production determines the social relations. Change in the mode of production changes social relations. The Hand mill creates a feudal society. The steam mill creates the capitalist or industrial society. The economic factor not only governs the social organisation but also moulds philosophy and religious beliefs of a society. Marx describes the culture of the society as the superstructure

It is based on economic life or the productive forces which are described by Marx as the basic structure.

Human history has gone through four important stages:-

The stage of primitive communism – a stage of complete equality.

The age of slavery – based on inequality. The two classes were the slaves and the masters.

The Feudal society – the landlords and the serfs.

The capitalist society – The capitalists and the workers.

All these social organizations are based on forces of production their ownership and modes of production. The process of change will continue till the perfect form of production is reached. The forms of production are continuously developing. Thus Marx relates the social-political-legal systems with the economic system. If there are similarities in the economic system that means the mode of production and the social-political-legal then there will be stability in the society. But if these forces fail to adjust with each other there will be instability in the society. The only way out is the revolution. Referring to the capitalist society Marx says that the mode of production is collective and the ownership of means of production is private hence there is a conflict between the labour and the capital.

This conflict will be resolved under socialism when means of production are socialised. The class struggle is the only way to solve the problem.

## CLASS STRUGGLE

While dialectical materialism is the principle, historical materialism is the application of the principle to the human history. It explains the process of social change. The theory of class struggle describes the mechanism of the process of change.

Many philosophers have tried to divide society in different types of groups e.g. Religious groups, caste groups, political groups. Max Weber divides society in social classes on the basis of social status. According to Marx none of these divisions are real. Production is the basic activity of human beings therefore divisions based on production relations are the real ones i.e. The economic classes.

Marx argues that there are only two classes in the society – the exploiter and the exploited, the oppressor and the oppressed or the haves and havenots. The class which owns the means of production also controls the social-political-legal system and therefore it is a powerful class. The other class which do not own the means of production is a powerless class. Both these classes have antagonistic relations

because they have contradictory interests. The powerful class exploits the powerless class. Class relations change with the change in the epoch. An epoch changes with the change in the system of production. History has gone through different epochs. First stage was of the primitive communism – a stage of equality. But in all other epochs we have two antagonistic classes e.g. Slavery – freeman and slave. Feudalism – land lord and serf. Capitalism – Capitalist and workers the bourgeois and the proletariat.

A class is a open group. Upward or downward movement is possible. Members of a class have similar economic interests. They have common culture. More importantly they have the feeling of self consciousness. Without the feeling of self consciousness unity among class members is not possible. Class is basically an antagonistic concept. It has no independent existence. Its existence is related

with the other class having contradictory interests. They have competitive interrelations. The powerful class always exploits the weaker class. Victory belongs to the powerful.

Explaining the situation in the capitalist society Marx says that mainly there are two classes in the capitalist society – the capitalists and the workers. The workers are being exploited by the capitalists. But capitalism carries on the seeds of its destruction. The workers should understand this situation. They should unite and start a struggle with the capitalists. Marx says " Workers of the world unite and you will have to loose nothing but chains ". Development of capitalism will result in concentration of means of production in favour hands and severe exploitation of the workers. Both the factors are favourable to the workers. Big corporations will automatically unite the workers and severe exploitation will cement their unity. Workers should start a struggle with the capitalists. They will be victorious. They should control the state apparatus, establish socialism and end capitalism. Marx has also explained in detail the theory of state and revolution.

## MARXIAN THEORY OF STATE AND REVOLUTION

Aristotle considers the state as a natural institution. Hegel glorifies the state by calling it the reflection of Universal Mind or the Spirit. Austin and other monists consider the state a equal to other social and economic institutions. But there is no doubt that they have recognised its importance. They consider it as the first

among equals. The Marxist view of state is completely different from all the above explained concepts.

Marx makes a distinction between the basic structure and the superstructure of the society. The basic structure consists of the economic activities and the political-social-legal activities are part of the superstructure. The superstructure is based on the basic structure. Changes in the basic structure reflect in the superstructure.

Marx considers State as the part of the superstructure. Naturally those who dominate the basic structure, dominate the superstructure. In capitalism the capitalists control the state. Marx says that state is not an institution created for well being of the society as Hegel argues but it acts as the executive committee of the capitalists. They have created the state so that they can fully concentrate on their economic activities.

State acts as an oppressive machinery. It has brutal force which is legalised. The brutal force of the state is used to suppress the enemies of capitalism. State acts as an agent of the capitalists.

### DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT

In a highly developed capitalist society workers are automatically organised because of the Big corporations. They should develop a feeling of self consciousness. They should develop class consciousness and revolt against the capitalist. Victory of the workers is certain. It will be the result of inevitable process of development.

After revolution the workers will destroy capitalism and related culture based on inequality, injustice, discrimination and exploitation. But they will not destroy the state. They will utilise the state apparatus in realising the changes. The bourgeoisie state was the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The workers will establish their own dictatorship. They will eliminate capitalism with the help of state apparatus and establish Socialism and socialist society. In the socialist society there will be only one class – the proletariat class. Power will be concentrated in their hands. Means of production will be owned by the society. The state will direct the development.

Marx said that the proletarian revolution will be possible, only in advanced capitalist societies. In feudal societies there will be two phases of revolution. In the first phase the workers should help the capitalists to destroy the feudal society and establish capitalism. Because of the particular nature of feudalism i.e. singular mode of production it is very difficult to develop class consciousness among the exploited class and to successfully revolt against the feudal lords. The capitalists alone have the will and power backed by plenty of resources. Therefore to destroy feudalism,

workers should support the capitalists. Circumstances in capitalist society are favourable to the proletariat.

## WITHERING AWAY OF THE STATE

Marx considered the state as intrinsically evil. He said that it indicates class divisions in the society. Partiality is inherent in it. Therefore state should be destroyed. But some of the characteristics of the state will serve the purpose of the proletariat. It has the brutal, organised and legitimate force. That force will be directed against the enemies of proletariat state such as the capitalists. Thus the state serves the short term goals of the proletariat revolution. Hence it should not be destroyed.

Gradually the socialist state will be successful in eliminating all the evils of capitalism. Discrimination and exploitation will end. All other classes will be destroyed. Only the Proletariat will remain. But in the society based on equality, cooperation, justice and coexistence i.e. the communist society, the institution of state will not be necessary. Because there will be no classes. The state will wither away. There will be no rulers and ruled. It will be an anarchist society. All will be equal. It will be a free and classless society. Difference between individual and society will end. Each man will contribute to the society as per his need. In the socialist society the principle of each according to his capacity and each according to his work, prevails.

## THEORY OF SURPLUS VALUE

Ricardo the classical economist stated a theory of value which stated that value of every commodity is proportional to the quantity of labour spent on producing it. Marx's theory of surplus value is the extension of this theory of value. According to Marx every commodity has two kinds of values – use value and exchange value. The use value differs from person to person. Exchange value is represented by price. It is same for all persons at a given time. It changes according to market conditions.

Price is determined by socially useful labour expended on producing it. Labour is also itself a commodity. It receives wages in return of the services rendered. The difference between the price of goods sold and wages paid to the labour is the surplus value. The workers are paid less and the surplus is exploited by the capitalists. e.g. Raw material of Rs. 100 is required to make a finished product. The finished product is sold to Rs.200. That means Rs.100 belong to the labourer, it is the value of his labour. But he is paid only Rs.50 and the other 50 are pocketed by the capitalist. This is injustice. The worker is helpless because labour is a perishable commodity. It can't be stored. Bargaining power of the labourer is very weak.



Because of this, class antagonism develops between the worker and the capitalist and finally it leads to class struggle.

## CRITICISM

Marx has provided the most scientific and unique framework to analyse the social phenomenon. His concern for the exploitation of workers and overall discrimination, injustice and inequalities is admirable. He gives more importance to material and particularly economic factors in understanding the process of social change. He says that though they are not the only factors which affect the process of change they have primary importance.

Many predictions of Marx have been falsified. As against Marx's prediction that the Communist revolution will take place only in highly developed capitalist state it took place in the feudal Russia. The highly developed capitalist societies in Europe and America were successful in avoiding the Marxist revolution. The concept of Welfare state came forward. The hardships of the workers were minimised. Most of these countries had colonies in Asia and Africa. They exploited these countries and served their working class. After II<sup>nd</sup> world war the political domination of these colonies was replaced by economic domination. Exploitation continued therefore it was possible for them to maintain a high standard of living. Capitalism has moderated itself.

The State apparatus has become more stronger. It is deeply rooted in the society. It is difficult to overthrow this apparatus. The bureaucracy, the police and intelligence agencies, the highly disciplined military altogether strengthen the state apparatus.

Marx totally neglects the psychological aspects of politics. The feeling of nationalism has played a very important role in international politics. People have come together forgetting their class differences. Nations have been destroyed and built because of nationalist feelings.

Marx has openly believed in violence and he advises the workers to use violence against the capitalists. It is not certain that whether workers will be successful in the struggle by using violent methods. The moral problem of use of violence has been totally neglected.

It is very difficult to create a sense of self self-consciousness among the workers. Lenin has rightly pointed out this defect. He says workers are only interested in increasing their salaries. They couldn't understand the complex matters nor they are interested. Further it is taken for granted that workers will unite and will be successful

in their struggle against the capitalists, there is no guarantee that the proletarian state will establish an egalitarian society. There is a strong possibility that an unjust society tilted towards the interests of the workers will be created.

Practice has proved this fear beyond doubt. There was first communist revolution in Russia. The Communist party led the revolution. Later on it developed its own vested interests. It neglected the interests of the society and protected its own interests with the help of state apparatus. The inevitable result was the collapse of the Russian model in 1989-90-91.

The theory of dialectical materialism can provide valuable insight in the history of human development but the Marxist claim that it is the only scientific approach to understand the reality can't be accepted.

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